

STARS STRIPES®

**Actor goes
from hobbit
to 'Lost' boy**
Page 18

Dominic Monaghan

**S. Korean troops
arrive in northern
Iraq to help rebuild**
Page 4

Los Angeles Dodgers' Steve Finley

**Finley's blast
lifts L.A. to title;
Angels also win**
Back page

Volume 2, No. 177 © EPSS 2004 MIDEAST EDITION

MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2004

Major eruption 'imminent' at Mount St. Helens

Hundreds cleared from area around Wash. volcano Page 6

Remembering Samarra

Targeted by a suicide bomber, the soldiers of the 1st's ID's 1-26 Infantry lost five of their own July 8, when a vehicle rammed into a building on an Iraqi National Guard compound. Inside, some of the survivors of that attack tell their story.

Page 3



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY
PETER PHOTINOF
Stars and Stripes

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

World

Vatican beatifications: Pope John Paul II moved five Catholics closer to sainthood Sunday in Vatican City, including Austria's last reigning emperor Karl I and German nun Anna Katharina Emmerick, whose graphic visions of Christ's suffering helped inspire the blockbuster movie "The Passion of the Christ." Cheers went up in St. Peter's Square from a crowd of about 30,000 people when the pontiff finished reading the Latin words with which he beatified the five candidates, and banners with their images were unfurled on the facade of St. Peter's Basilica. Beatification is the last formal step in the Catholic church before possible sainthood.

Oktoberfest attendance drop: Two weeks of cold, rainy weather kept visitors away from Munich's beer-fueled Oktoberfest, which attracted several hundred thousand fewer participants than last year, organizers said at the event's close Sunday. Around 5.9 million visitors showed up at the beer tents at Munich's sprawling Theresienwiese festival grounds, about 400,000 fewer than in 2003, director Gabriele Weishaupf told reporters. They dined about 5.5 million liters of beer, down 10 percent from the year before.

Bangladesh rally: More than 20,000 opposition supporters gathered for an anti-government rally Sunday amid tight security in Dhaka, Bangladesh. About 1,200 police fanned out among the large crowd of stolid guard around a downtown venue where the country's main opposition leader, Sheikh Hasina, was to give a speech, police official Nazmul Karim Khan said. Rally participants were randomly checked with metal detectors. On Aug. 21, several grenades were thrown at a rally of Hasina's Awami League party, killing 21 people and wounding more than 300. Hasina, who escaped unharmed, blamed the government for the attack. The government denied involvement and condemned the assault.

Aussie tourist death trial: Australian police on Sunday made contact with a British traveler who is expected to be a key witness in the trial of a man charged with throwing another British tourist to her death from a bridge. Police had issued a national alert Friday for Peter Ralph Boehmke to appear in the Queensland Supreme Court trial of Ian Douglas Preville.

Preville's trial began last week. He is charged with robbing and killing 19-year-old Caroline Stuttle on April 10, 2002, in Bundaberg, a town in the eastern state of Queensland. Prosecutors say Preville threw Stuttle from the bridge. She died instantly in the fall.

Afghanistan vote: A three-day drive to register Afghan refugees in Pakistan for historic presidential elections in their homeland has been extended for another day in a bid to get more people to sign up, organizers said Sunday.

The International Organization for Migration said it was giving refugees at camps and cities until Monday to register for the Oct. 9 poll so as many as possible could participate — amid signs that fewer than the expected 600,000 to 800,000 were signing up. Meanwhile, IOM reported arson at one registration center at a refugee camp in northwestern Pakistan. One was hurt, and it wasn't clear who was behind the first apparent attack reported on its more than 1,600 centers in the country.

Bird flu recurrence: A 9-year-old girl in northern Thailand has tested positive for



Haiti unrest: Yvon Feuille, foreground, Roudy Heriveau, second row right, and Louis Gerald Gilles, back center, are escorted under arrest Saturday from a room in the Radio Caribes building in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The three pro-Aristide politicians were arrested after barricading themselves in the Radio Caribes building for six hours before surrendering to police, denying involvement in clashes involving Haitians demanding the return of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Fighting continued Sunday, with at least 14 people killed.

bird flu, becoming the latest case of the deadly virus since it resurfaced in Southeast Asia in July, a health ministry official said Sunday.

Kanda Sriueng-On, who is in critical condition, is believed to have contracted the disease from infected birds, said Deputy Public Health Minister Anuthin Chanveerakul. Kanda was hospitalized in Phetchabun province on Sept. 30 with flu-like symptoms, and test results on Sunday showed she has the deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu, Anuthin said.

Thailand went on high alert last week after it reported that an earlier bird flu victim died after probably contracting the virus from her daughter in what is believed to be the country's first case of human-to-human transmission.

Polio vaccinations in Africa: Nigeria's president kicked off a mammoth effort to immunize 80 million children against polio in 23 African countries, described by international health experts as "the single-largest public health campaign" in history to wipe out the disease.

President Olusegun Obasanjo led health workers in giving doses of children oral vaccine drops in the mainly Muslim northern city of Kano, where until recently Islamic leaders had opposed immunization, inadvertently allowing the virus to spread in the region.

The campaign is being coordinated by the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which includes U.N. health agencies, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Rotary International.

Turkey's EU drive: Turkey's prime minister said Sunday he was confident of a "very positive" report card this week from the European Union's executive commission, and that he would settle for nothing less than negotiations over full membership in the bloc.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan planned to meet German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, a supporter of his country's bid to join the EU, during a one-day visit to Berlin and also was to receive a leadership award.

He told a meeting of Turkish businessmen that he was confident the European Commission's report on whether Turkey has met the EU's requirements to open

membership talks, due Wednesday, would bolster Ankara's hopes of eventually becoming a full EU member.

States

Kerry's health: Sen. John Kerry's doctors have told him he is cured of the prostate cancer that sidelined him almost two years ago and that there is a slim chance it could recur in the next decade, The New York Times said Sunday in a report based on interviews with the Democratic presidential nominee and several of his physicians.

"I am cured," the 60-year-old Kerry said in the interview last month. "I am cancer-free, and the percentages of me being cancer-free 10 years from now are about as good as they get."

He characterized the cancer as a nonissue in the campaign against President Bush. Even if the cancer came back, Kerry's doctors and other experts said it could be treated without seriously interfering with Kerry's presidential duties, should he be elected on Nov. 2.

NAACP election initiative: The widow of Martin Luther King Jr. said the right to vote should be open to everyone in a democracy, including those who have been convicted of crimes.

Ending the disenfranchisement of convicted felons is part of the unfinished business of the civil rights movement, Coretta Scott King said at an NAACP event marking the 40th anniversary of the Portland chapter in Maine.

During her keynote address Saturday night, King emphasized the need for political empowerment as a way to help minorities achieve gains in areas such as jobs and education.

She said that in a democracy, the right to vote should be absolute and should not, as in some states, be withheld from felons who have completed their prison sentences or remain free on probation or parole.

Stories and photo from wire services



King

Targeted in Samarra

1st ID soldiers reflect on July suicide attack

Editor's Note: This is the first installment of a three-part series.

BY STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

Cpl. Owen Fulsome sat on the edge of his bunk, muttering a blueberry muffin and clearing the sleep from his brain.

Minutes earlier his buddy, Spc. Damon Le, 19, had jostled the cot of the dark-haired 21-year-old Fulsome, his mortar platoon team leader, to wake him for his 11 a.m. shift monitoring the radio.

Fulsome and a dozen or so mortarmen from the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment lazed around their barracks room in shorts and T-shirts. Some slept, others ate, and a few just zoned out, capturing a few minutes of air-conditioned refuge from the searing July 8 morning at the Iraqi National Guard compound near the city of Samarra, a restless rebel stronghold 60 miles north of Baghdad.

Suddenly Fulsome heard a scream through the front door of the barracks. Sgt. Matthew Shepherd started through the room, cursing and shouting. "It's a bomb! It's a bomb!"

Fulsome jumped up behind him, heading toward the safety of the back room of the two-room barracks, where troops from Company A slept. He had run six or seven steps when the truck slammed into the front wall a few feet from his bunk. He turned back and saw its headlights glaring at him through the room's open front door.

He stood frozen. "I was just staring at it," Fulsome recalled weeks later, sitting on another bunk back home in Schweinfurt, Germany. "I thought, 'Isn't that supposed to blow up?'" Then it did.

Ready for war

On Sept. 11, 2001, Fulsome was shooting marksmanship drills in basic training.

"I thought it was going to be four years of something easy," said Fulsome, who grew up in the Phoenix suburb of Mesa, but it turned out to be a lot different.

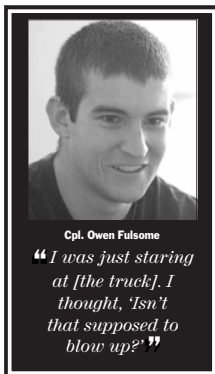
Sent to the 1-26 Infantry in Germany, he landed in the 2nd Squad of the unit's mortar platoon, which would be led by Staff Sgt. Michael Broner, 31, of Charlotte, N.C.

When Broner signed up in 1998, he planned to serve only three years. Instead he found he loved it. By the time he reached Schweinfurt in December 2000, he'd decided to make the military a career.

"I developed a passion, a burning desire," Broner said. "The patriotic side of me took over."

When the Blue Spaders of the 1-26 Infantry — along with the rest of 1st Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team — returned from a peacekeeping tour in Kosovo in November 2002, they awaited a war.

Within two months, rumors were confirmed with orders: The 2nd Brigade would head to Iraq to support the possible invasion of Iraq. It packed up and waited. Not until after Baghdad fell did they learn for certain they had missed the war.



Cpl. Owen Fulsome

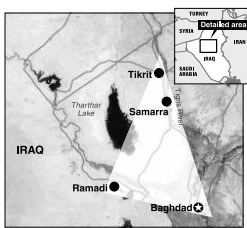
"I was just staring at [the truck]. I thought, 'Isn't that supposed to blow up?'"

"I was kind of pissed," said Spc. Kevin A. Terry, 22, a 1-26 Infantry mortarmen in the 3rd Squad. "They had us all boosted up for training, and then we didn't go."

But with the Army stretched thin, the Blue Spaders knew they'd head to Iraq soon enough. In July 2003, the Pentagon announced the Big Red One would take over the 4th Infantry Division's zone — including much of the "Sunni Triangle," the restive area north of Baghdad — the following spring. About 11,000 of the 1st ID's 12,000 Germany-based troops would make up the bulk of the force, beefed up by forces from the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division, and several National Guard and Reserve units.

Soldiers in Germany spent much of the fall at training areas in Hohenfels and Grafenwöhr, readying for a mission they were told would be a little war and lot of peacekeeping. Most held mixed views on

Inside the triangle



Source: CRTI

their belated Iraq deployment: sad to leave behind wives, husbands, kids and sweethearts, but glad to join the fight they'd been cheated out of a year earlier.

Remembering Samarra

On July 8, a suicide bomber disguised as an Iraqi policeman drove an SUV packed with explosives onto an Iraqi National Guard base in Samarra. He crashed the car into the side of a concrete building housing U.S. Army troops and detonated the bomb.

Five soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment died along with two Iraqi soldiers. At least two dozen others suffered injuries during the blast and the ensuing daylong battle with Iraqi insurgents.

It is the deadliest attack against Germany-based 1st ID troops in Iraq since the Big Red One deployed in February.

Citing its heavy staff workload, the division's press office in Tikrit declined to answer Stars and Stripes queries about the attack. But, with the help of 1-26 Infantry's rear detachment, five of the soldiers who survived the blast and returned to Germany to recuperate agreed to tell what happened that day.

Here is their story.

They got their fight, with a vengeance.

Long, hard spring

By March, Task Force 1-26 landed at Forward Operating Base Brassfield-Mora, near Samarra. It was barren and run-down.

"The FOB was probably the worst one in Iraq," Terry said. "The chow hall was bad."

But the phones and Internet hookup worked, if sporadically and slowly. Hot chow arrived via dangerous daily convoys from Tikrit.

Trash-strewn Samarra, home to 300,000 mostly Sunni Muslims allied with Saddam Hussein — had troubled the Americans since the beginning of the occupation. A roundup last December had netted 70 suspects. Deadly roadside bombs still killed and injured soldiers from time to time, and every so often a few mortar rounds would be lobbed at the base.

"Everything changes [with] the first mortar or rocket or bullet that's fired at you," Broner said. "The reality kicks in that people are trying to kill you."

Things heated up in mid-April after a rebel attack on a checkpoint, which soldiers said escalated into a 24-hour firefight pitting the insurgents against the newly minted Iraqi National Guard troops. Fulsome and Terry said many hadn't yet received basic training, and some of the Iraqis were as young as 15.

For the next three months, occasional mortar and homemade-bomb attacks punctuated an uneasy calm as the Blue Spaders grew accustomed to combat patrols around Samarra, but generally avoided the still-rebellious city.

As spring turned to summer, Task Force 1-26 troops supported the slowly rebuilding force at the Iraqi National Guard headquarters on the Tigris River, just across a bridge from the city.

"It was good for us," Fulsome said. "Had we been in the city, we probably would have been shot at a lot more."

At the request of city officials, U.S. and Iraqi patrols stayed out of the city, essentially turning it over to guerrilla forces. From guard posts, Fulsome said, it was easy to see rebels carrying grenade launchers on



Staff Sgt. Michael Broner

"Everything changes [with] the first mortar or rocket or bullet that's fired at you. The reality kicks in that people are trying to kill you."

the streets of Samarra. Iraqi soldiers who lived in the area wore ski masks even on the hottest days, Fulsome said, for fear of revenge attacks on themselves or their families if they were recognized.

Last week, the U.S. military launched a major offensive to regain control of the city, attacking insurgent positions and searching homes after going months without a U.S. presence in the city.

In early June a warning reached the National Guard camp that someone might try to drive a truck bomb onto the base. The guards searched vehicles carefully but never spotted any explosives.

"When they first heard about it, everybody was on alert looking for it," Fulsome said. "But it kind of faded away."

U.S. soldiers said they warned the Iraqi soldiers guarding the base's concertina-wire gate: Never open it for any vehicle until you've checked the driver's identification.

If only they'd listened.

E-mail Steve Liewer at: liewers@mail.estrimes.com

U.S., Iraqi forces claim victory in Samarra

BY ZIDAN KHALAF

The Associated Press

SAMARRA, Iraq — U.S. and Iraqi forces scoured Samarra for holdouts on Sunday after two days of fierce fighting to reclaim control of the city from Sunni militants. Overnight, U.S. warplanes hammered Fallujah, another rebel-held city, killing at least four people, hospital officials said.

U.S. and Iraqi commanders have declared the operation in Samarra, 60 miles northwest of Baghdad, a successful first step in a major push to wrest key parts of the country from insurgents before January elections.

Iraqi police patrolled the city Sunday, while American soldiers and Iraqi National Guard members went house to house searching for insurgents and weapons caches.

As the gunfire subsided, residents emerged from their homes to survey the damage and bury the dead.

The military said 125 rebels have been killed and 88 captured since the operation started early Friday.

"This is great news for the people of Samarra, 200,000 people who have been held captive, hostage if you will, by just a couple of hundred thugs," Maj. Gen. John Batiste, commander of the U.S. 1st Infantry Division, told CNN on Saturday.

Many residents agreed. "Since several months, the city has been living in a state of lawlessness," said Abbas Mahmoud, 30. "I hope that after this operation, law and order will be restored."

But there was also mounting anger at the number of civilians killed, including women and children.

According to Abdul-Nasser Hamed Yassin, an official at Samarra General Hospital, 70 bodies had been brought to the hospital morgue. A total of 160 wounded also arrived at the hospital. It was not known if any of the dead were rebel fighters.

Yassin said that of the 70 dead, 23 were children and 18 women.

There were 23 women among the 160 wounded, Yassin said.

"The people who were hurt most are normal people who have nothing to do with anything," said Abdel Latif Hadi, 45.

At the main hospital, bodies in black plastic bags were loaded on a truck to be taken to the cemetery Sunday.

A few grocery stores were open, but most businesses remained shuttered. Resi-



A burning U.S. military vehicle is pulled back to a base after a roadside bomb explosion in Baghdad on Saturday. No reports of casualties were available.

dents moved around on foot, saying the military had instructed them not to use cars.

There was no electricity in the city, but water service had resumed, residents said.

The strikes in Fallujah, 40 miles west of Baghdad, were the latest in weeks of attacks aimed at groups with links to terrorists, particularly the network of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Followers of the Jordanian militant have claimed responsibility for a string of deadly bombings, kidnappings and other attacks across the country.

The city hospital said two people were killed and 12 wounded in airstrikes on four neighborhoods. Two more people, a man and a woman, were killed and two wounded when a tank fired on a house in the city's southern suburbs, Dr. Rafe al-Issawi said.

The U.S. military, which confirmed only one strike aimed at a building where insurgents were moving weapons, regularly accuses the hospital of inflating casualty figures.

"Forty-five minutes of secondary explosions indicated the building was being

used as a huge weapons/ammunition depot," a coalition statement said. "A large number of enemy fighters are presumed killed."

Both of Baghdad, two bodies, one with a severed head, were found early Sunday, with police saying the corpses looked like those of Westerners.

But Police Lt. Hussein Rizouqi said no identification was found on the corpses which were discovered in the area of Yousfiyah, 12 miles south of Baghdad.

The man's head had been severed and was tied to his body while the woman, who had blond hair, was shot in the head, the police officer said.

From photographs taken at the Mahmoudiya hospital it was difficult to determine the racial background of two dead persons.

Roadside bombs exploded Sunday on the western outskirts of Baghdad, west of the capital in Samarra and to the north in Baquba.

One Iraqi was killed and three wounded

Marines capture 3 foreign fighters near Syrian border

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — U.S. Marines captured three foreign fighters during a raid on a safe house near the Syrian border, the U.S. command said in a statement Sunday.

The three, two Syrians and one Palestinian, were detained during a raid on Sept. 29 near Qaim, a town in the western Anbar province, the military said.

Other insurgents also were arrested, the military said without specifying the number.

U.S. and Iraqi officials have repeatedly said that foreign fighters have joined the insurgency and found safe havens in Anbar towns such as rebel-held Fallujah.

The insurgents are waging a 17-month-old fight to undermine the U.S.-backed interim authorities and drive the United States and its allies out of Iraq.

in a roadside blast in Abu Ghraib on the western approaches to the Iraqi capital, according to an Interior Ministry official who requested anonymity.

Near Ramadi to the west of Baghdad, a U.S. military convoy was attacked by bomb which police said caused no casualties. But eyewitnesses said U.S. fire killed one woman in a farm near the scene of the explosion.

North of the capital, a police car hit a roadside bomb in the city of Baquba, injuring one policeman, officials said.

Five Iraqi civilians were wounded by U.S. tank fire early Sunday in the vast Baghdad slum of Sadr City, hospital officials said. The U.S. military had no immediate information on the incident.

The area has seen daily clashes and shelling as U.S. and Iraqi forces attempt to root out fighters loyal to radical Shiite Muslim cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

U.S. and Iraqi officials have pledged a major push to retake areas that have fallen to insurgents before the elections due by Jan. 31.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, 1,055 members of the U.S. military had died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to the Defense Department.

Of those, 801 died as a result of hostile action and 254 died of non-hostile causes. The figures include three military civilians.

The British military has reported 37 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, six; Ukraine, eight; Slovakia, three; Thailand, two; the Netherlands, two; and Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that

major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 917 U.S. military members have died, 692 as a result of hostile action and 225 of non-hostile causes, according to the military's numbers as of Friday. There was no update provided on Saturday.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ One U.S. soldier was killed Friday by small arms fire.

The latest identification reported by the Department of Defense:

■ Army Staff Sgt. Darren J. Cunningham, 40, Groton, Mass.; died Thursday in Baghdad, Iraq, when his unit came under mortar attack; assigned to the 89th Military Police Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas.

S. Korean troops helping to rebuild in north

BY JULIANA GITTIER

Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD — More than 2,500 South Korean troops arrived in the northeastern Kurdish province of Erbil on Saturday to take over safety, stability and civil-military operations in the region, according to coalition forces news statement.

On Sunday, military officials in South Korea elevated its terrorism alert level after the country was named by a high-ranking al-Qaida member as a target for attacks.

The South Korean Zaytun Division took over for soldiers from Multi-National Brigade West in Mosul. "The arrival of soldiers from the Republic of Korea into this great nation demonstrates the strong partnership between Iraq, Korea and the coalition forces," said Maj. Gen. An-

drew Farquhar, deputy commanding general of Multi-National Corps Iraq and acting commander of Task Force Olympia.

The South Koreans will work primarily on construction and repairing the area's infrastructure.

The deployment will assist U.S. and coalition efforts to rebuild Iraq's north. It also strengthens the 50-year military relationship between the United States and South Korea. About 37,000 U.S. servicemen are stationed in South Korea including 3,600 from the Second Infantry Division currently deployed to the Fallujah area in Iraq.

South Korea's parliament initially wavered on sending troops to Iraq amid public opposition. The deployment makes South Korea the third largest contributor to the coalition, after the United States and Britain, and will cost the country \$200 million, ac-

cording to researchers at the conservative Heritage Foundation.

South Korea was mentioned in a tape aired Friday by Al-Jazeera television in which Ayman al-Zawahiri, a deputy to Osama bin Laden, urged Muslims to carry out strikes against the United States and its allies.

According to Associated Press reports, the South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff headquarters issued guidelines to its military organizations on Sunday calling on them to heighten security at major state and military facilities and to increase their cooperation with state organizations.

U.S. personnel in South Korea are under a 9 p.m. curfew to guard against possible terror attacks or local protests as the South Korean troops moved into Iraq, AP reports stated.

E-mail: Juliana Gittier at: gittierj@spjpress.osd.mil

Rice stands by assessment of Saddam's nukes

BY JENNIFER C. KERR

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — National security adviser Condoleezza Rice on Sunday defended her characterization of Saddam Hussein's nuclear capabilities in the months before the Iraq invasion, even as a published report said government experts had cast doubt at the time.

In the run-up to the March 2003 war, Rice said in a television interview in 2002 that the Iraqi president was trying to obtain high-strength aluminum tubes to rebuild his nuclear weapons program. The

tubes, she said, were "really only suited for nuclear weapons programs."

On Sunday, Rice acknowledged she was aware of a debate among U.S. intelligence agencies about whether those tubes were intended for nuclear weapons. The State Department, she said, had raised concerns, but she said there was other evidence that could not be ignored.

"The intelligence community assessment as a whole as that these (tubes) were likely and certainly suitable for, and likely for, his nuclear weapons program," Rice told ABC's "This Week."

She said the director of the CIA at the

time, George Tenet, believed that the tubes were for centrifuge parts.

"When you are faced with an assessment that Saddam Hussein is reconstituting his nuclear weapons program, that he has by the end of the decade the probability of having a nuclear weapons... the tendency is always not to want to underestimate these programs," Rice said.

But two years later, Rice insisted she has no regrets about how the administration portrayed what it believed was a dangerous threat posed by Saddam.

"I stand by that to this day the correctness of the decision to take seriously an intelligence assessment that Saddam Hussein

would likely have a nuclear weapon" if action wasn't taken.

"We were all unhappy that the intelligence was not as good as we had thought that it was. But the essential judgment was absolutely right: Saddam Hussein was a threat," she said.

A New York Times story Sunday quoted four CIA officials and a senior administration official as saying that Rice and her staff had been told in 2001 that Energy Department experts believed the tubes were probably intended for small artillery rockets — and not nuclear weapons.

Rice said she learned of objections by the Energy Department only after making her 2002 comments.

Iraq insurgency slows down reconstruction efforts

BY WARD SANDERSON

Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD — The U.S. office responsible for rebuilding Iraq has missed goals and juggled finances due to the country's deadly guerrilla insurgency.

Insurgents have found improvement projects to be inviting targets, according to a senior U.S. official here. "We are clearly in a wartime environment," said the State Department figure, speaking at a briefing. According to briefing guidelines, the official is not identified.

Large power turbines crawling across the landscape are difficult to miss on the horizon. Insurgents terrorize base camps and individ-

ual contractors as well as continually bombarding the International Airport in central Baghdad.

"They get shot at a lot," the official said, particularly of convoys hauling large infrastructure items like turbines. "All of this affects schedules. It affects our ability to see how projects are doing."

Terrorism and kidnappings have cost the United States money. U.S. officials would spend \$1.8 billion from the improvements column and put it toward protecting staff like drivers, contractors and engineers. All told, the U.S. Embassy's Iraq Reconstruction Management Offices is slated to spend \$5 billion of its \$18 billion budget on protecting its people.

"The insurgency is more in-

tense now," the official said. The attacks aren't always killing people — but too often, the official confirmed, they do. And even when attacks fail to take life, they stifle progress. Schedules slip.

This comes as continued fighting creates yet more work once the smoke of battle clears. Take Najaf, a city considered holy by Shiite Muslims because it is home of the tomb of Imam Ali, the sect's founder.

"The number of pilgrims coming there is very large, and they need hotels," the official said. The Americans are focused largely on cleaning up Najaf. Construction is simply more difficult.

One measure the Americans hope will protect staff and sched-

uling is using contractors from the same town in which work is to be done.

In addition to lessening the need for security, the plan is expected to lower labor costs.

Danger on the ground also has caused worries for upcoming elections. The embassy's reconstruction office now has an additional \$80 million set aside for voter education and election monitors.

Despite dangers, the official said the U.S. money has gone to good use, including 37 electrical substations built or repaired, 187 new schools, four police stations and five fire stations. And projects to secure it all include paying for 39,000 police and 14,000 border guards.

The official also gently criticized a Reuters news report castigating the government had intentionally inflated the number of jobs it claimed were created by USAID projects. A government report claiming that figure was 58,436 jobs was later scaled in favor of the more conservative figure of 55,463.

A number of projects of Iraqis employed daily by U.S.-funded projects was finally settled at 75,000. Not all of those, however, were paid for by USAID. The official said it was a legitimate mistake. "When given a choice between conspiracy and chaos [for accounting errors]" he said, "choose chaos."

E-mail reporter Ward Sanderson at: sandersonw@mid-east.strips.osd.mil

Legal buzz kills 'beer for soldiers' Internet site

BY SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

CAMP RED CLOUD, South Korea — The 2nd Infantry Division soldier who created www.beerforsoldiers.com, a Web site that lets people buy a beer online for a U.S. soldier, has been ordered to stop running his site.

Sgt. Dale Rogers, in Iraq with Company C, 1st Battalion (air assault), 503rd Infantry Regiment, posted a notice on the site last week informing readers that he is turning it over to his brother.

A spokesman for the 2nd Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, which includes I-503, said an e-mail that lawyers from the unit rendered a legal opinion that the Web site violated the Joint Ethics Regulation.

"The soldier seems to be using his association with the Army as a way to solicit funds for beer. Whatever his intentions, and I'm sure they are genuine and pure, (the Web site is)... illegal. I noted... however, that the site is still up and running. I am confident it will be shut down soon," the spokesman said.

Last week Rogers posted a defiant message on the Web site in response to the order.

"I won't back down! Stand me up at the gates of hell and I won't

back down," the message said, quoting a Tom Petty song.

"I am currently serving somewhere outside of Fallujah, Iraq. My Web site is going through a change. I am turning over this Web site to my brother due to legal pukes who say a soldier cannot solicit beer donations to increase the morale of his fellow soldiers. What a rock! But I am a soldier and I have to comply," Rogers wrote.

By Sunday night beerforsoldiers.com had adopted the slogan "The Web site where you cannot buy us a beer."

Rogers set up the site in February before joining I-503 in South Korea, where the unit was based before deploying to Iraq last month.

Beerforsoldiers.com used to let donors click on links that charged their credit cards for anything from \$2 for a "beer bottle of beer" to \$6 for a "tall beer from the bar," or \$7 for a six-pack. Other donation options included \$10 for a "pitcher" or \$20 for a "keg club."

The site includes dozens of photographs of soldiers enjoying the beer.

In South Korea, Rogers spent money collected from the Web site buying drinks for soldiers at local bars. He had intended to



SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

Soldiers in Iraq crave beer, women and high-speed Internet connections, in that order, claims Sgt. Dale Rogers — but the soldier says Department of Defense lawyers expressed concern that his Web site, which encourages donations of beers for soldiers, may violate the Joint Ethics Regulation.

save money generated by the site while he is in Iraq, where soldiers are not allowed to drink alcohol, for drinks during a mission leave in Qatar and a homecoming party for soldiers at the end of his one-year tour, he said.

Now, clicking on the "Don't buy us beer" link at beerforsoldiers.com takes you to a page with the word "violation" displayed six times, an invitation to the site and the message: "We would still love for you to buy us a beer but the legal folks say you can't."

Donations rose sharply after Stars and Stripes ran a story about the site in September, he said.

An e-mail from Rogers stated he was ordered to "cease and desist" running the site at the behest of the Army's lawyers.

However, Ron Buchholz, a civilian attorney for the Department of the Army, Judge Advocate General, Standards of Conduct Branch in Washington, said he merely sent Rogers' command an e-mail stating that the site raised legal and ethical issues.

Buchholz said he has no authority to issue orders to soldiers but acknowledged that an order from Rogers' command may have been a response to his e-mail.

Federal regulations make it illegal for federal employees, including soldiers, to solicit or receive gifts. But numerous complicated exceptions to those rules mean legal opinions often are sought when people want to give soldiers presents, Buchholz said.

The shaven-headed infantryman does not appear happy that the Army's ban on beer donations.

"You'd think that a soldier risking his life in a war zone, usually under enemy attacks almost daily, could at least have the right to maintain a morale builder for his fellow brothers, such as this Web site," Rogers said.

E-mail Seth Robson at: robsonsp@strips.osd.mil

IN THE STATES

Major eruption at Mount St. Helens imminent

Scientists raise Wash. volcano's alert to Level 3

BY DAVID AMMONS
The Associated Press

MOUNT ST. HELENS NATIONAL MONUMENT, Wash. — Scientists detected a volcanic tremor at Mount St. Helens early Sunday, just hours after officials raised the volcano's alert level, cleared hundreds of visitors from the area and warned a major eruption was imminent.

Sunday's tremor lasted about 25 minutes and was milder than the 50-minute tremor that followed a steam release Saturday, said Jeff Wynn, chief scientist for volcano hazards at the U.S. Geological Survey's Cascade Volcano Observatory.

"It just means that what's been happening is still happening" and the volcano is moving toward an additional eruption, Wynn said.

Scientists expect the impending blast to be much smaller than the May 18, 1980, explosion that killed 57 people and costed much of the Northwest with ash. But the tremors and steam detected since quake activity began Sept. 23 signaled more seismic energy than at any point since the 1980 explosion.

The volcano alert was raised to Level 3, which "indicates we feel an eruption is imminent, or is in progress," said U.S. Geological Survey geologist Tom Pierson. He said Saturday afternoon that an explosion probably would happen within the next 24 hours.

On Friday, the volcano erupted a plume of steam and ash thou-



Cars make their way down from the Johnston Ridge Observatory Saturday past the media parking area at Mount St. Helens, Wash., on Spirit Lake Memorial Highway after the U.S. Forest Service closed the center just after noon because of changes in the seismic activity on the mountain. Soon afterwards, the media was told to move several miles down the road.

sands of feet into the air, but there was a scant release of steam Saturday — a puff of white cloud, followed by a dust-raising landslide in the crater. A volcanic tremor signal that came next was what prompted the heightened alert level, and scientists detected elevated levels of volcanic gases later in the day.

Hundreds of visitors at the building closest to the volcano — Johnston Ridge Observatory five miles away — were asked to leave Saturday. Some relocated several miles north to Coldwater Ridge Visitors Center, which officials said was safe.

People pitched tents alongside park roads and spent the night waiting to see what the rumbling volcano would do. Saturday was the busiest day ever at visitors' centers on the mountain, with thousands of people packing buildings, crowding parking lots and sitting alongside roads in lawn chairs.

Barbara Jordin, 53, of Camas, said she saw the plume at midday and was afraid she'd miss something if she left the area. "I just stare at it and stare at it. It's too awesome to leave," she said.

Interior Secretary Gale Norton, who flew over the mountain Satur-

day, said the seismic activity has weakened the 1,000-foot lava dome that began forming in the volcano's crater after the 1980 eruption.

"The greatest concern at this point is an ash plume and the spread of ash itself that might come from an explosion," Norton said. "This is a concern for aircraft travel."

Saturday's tremor lasted about an hour before it was drowned out by a series of earthquakes — one or two a minute, with a maximum magnitude of "well over 2," said Tom Yelin, a USGS seismologist at the University of Washing-

ton's seismic laboratory in Seattle.

The growing consensus among scientists is that new magma is probably entering the volcano's upper levels, bringing with it volatile gases that could lead to eruptions, said Bill Steele at the University of Washington.

Later Saturday, scientists flew past the volcano to measure its emissions. USGS spokeswoman Stephanie Hanna said for the first time in this Volcano Alert the instruments are detecting elevated levels of carbon dioxide, which escapes as magma rises toward the surface from the Earth's interior.

The increasing rate at which a volcano releases gases like CO₂ and sulfur dioxide reflects changes in the volume of magma rising within its reservoir. Scientists at the rim of the volcano smelled hydrogen sulfide, similar to rotten eggs, Wynn said.

The USGS said explosions from the crater could occur without warning, possibly throwing rock onto the flanks of the volcano.

Still, scientists said the evacuation of the observatory was primarily a precaution in case of heavy ash, which could make it difficult to drive.

"We still feel the risk is confined to this area," Pierson said.

No communities are near Mount St. Helens; the closest, Toutle, is 30 miles west. Few people live near the mountain, the centerpiece of the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest about 100 miles south of the volcano.

The 1980 blast obliterated the top 1,300 feet of the volcano, devastated miles of forest and buried the North Fork of the Toutle River in debris and ash as much as 600 feet deep.

IMF, World Bank weigh terror war, debt

BY HARRY DUNPHY
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Governments must actively oppose terrorism but must not let that fight renege efforts to strengthen the global economic recovery and reduce poverty in the world's poorest countries, international finance officials said Sunday.

Referring to wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa and violence in other parts of the world, World Bank President James Wolfensohn said governments have become preoccupied with security.

"It is absolutely right that we fight terror. We must," he said. "The danger, however, is that in our preoccupation with immediate threats, we lose sight of the longer term and equally urgent causes of our insecure world: frustration and lack of hope."

He said eradication of poverty was essential to global stability and peace.

Wolfensohn and Rodrigo Rato, head of the International Monetary Fund, spoke on the final day

of the annual meetings of the two Washington-based lending institutions, owned by its 184 member governments.

Rato said the governments still had much to do to boost the global economic recovery, including carefully monitoring effects of higher oil prices on their economies.

"To date, in many of our member countries, the impact of higher oil prices on output and inflation appears moderate," Rato said.

"But a high oil price places an especially heavy burden on the poorest countries, in part by reducing their ability to finance much-needed imports."

He said the IMF stands ready to help them.

Rato said another challenge facing governments was to manage an orderly transition to higher interest rates.

In talks Friday and Saturday the United States and other leading industrial nations failed to resolve differences over debt reduc-

tion for poor countries and Iraq. They also expressed unease over the effect rising oil prices might have on world economies.

Tight security was in place outside the meetings, with many downtown Washington streets closed to traffic and large concrete barrier blocks in place. In August, the United States reported that the IMF and World Bank were on a terrorist target list of major financial institutions.

About a dozen protesters set up a tent in a small, heavily barricaded park across the street from the World Bank and IMF headquarters, which are a few blocks from the White House.

In a demonstration on the Ellipse, a grassy area between the White House and the Washington Monument, about 300 people protested the Iraq war. U.S. Park Police arrested 28 who police said had illegally crossed a barrier set up between the White House and the demonstration. The 28 were trying to deliver to the White House a cardboard box carrying names of people who had died in the conflict.

Former POWs to get more veterans' benefits

BY ANGELA K. BROWN
The Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — All former U.S. prisoners of war who suffer from heart disease or stroke will receive government health care benefits without having to prove the ailments were linked to their captivity, Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi said Saturday.

He announced the benefits while addressing the annual convention of the American Ex-Prisoners of War, an Arlington-based group with about 21,000 members nationwide.

Former POWs had received coverage if they could prove their heart disease or stroke was caused by deprivation and brutality while imprisoned decades ago. But proving that link was difficult despite studies that have shown stress in captivity leads to such diseases, Principi said.

"These are the men and some women who endured the most brutal of hardships in captivity,"

he said. "Their stories are what it means to be an American."

Some 20,000 former POWs are expected to receive the new benefits, which will go into effect Thursday and do not require congressional approval. The benefits will cost at least \$26 million the first year and will be absorbed in the veterans' health care budget, Principi said.

Some 35,900 American ex-POWs were still alive as of January, including more than 33,000 from World War II, 2,100 from the Korean War and nearly 600 from Vietnam, according to the VA.

All ex-POWs are eligible for benefits covering several illnesses, including psychosis, any anxiety state and post-traumatic arthritis.

Former servicemen held captive for at least 30 days are eligible for health-care coverage of several illnesses, including cirrhosis of the liver, irritable bowel syndrome and peptic ulcer disease.

Poll shows debate closed gap between Kerry, Bush

BY RONALD BROWNSTEIN
AND KATHLEEN HENNESSEY

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — John F. Kerry improved his image with voters who watched his debate with President Bush last week but didn't significantly shift their choice in the presidential race, a Los Angeles Times Poll of debate viewers has found.

While the debate generally did not diminish impressions of Bush on most questions, it did restore some of the luster Kerry had lost amid relentless Republican pounding since his party's convention in July, the poll found.

The key political question will be whether those gains in Kerry's image will help him peel away voters from Bush in the days ahead.

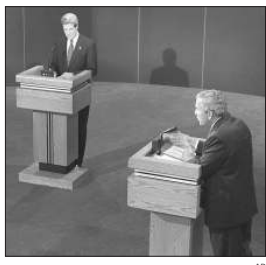
More than three times as many of the people who watched Thursday's debate chose Kerry rather than Bush as the winner, the poll found. Kerry also made gains with viewers on questions relating to national security and strength of leadership.

And the percentage of debate viewers with a favorable perception of Kerry increased from 52 percent before to 57 percent after.

Kerry's most dramatic advance in the survey came in convincing more voters that he has a thorough agenda for the next four years. Asked which candidate had the more detailed plan for the policies he would pursue if elected, those who watched the debate gave Bush a nine-percentage point edge before the encounter, afterward, they preferred Kerry by four percentage points.

"I thought (Kerry) did remarkably well within that format," said Joanne Sullivan, a registered Republican from Bremen, Maine. "He was very specific and went from Point A to Point B so much better than the platitudes that emerged from George Bush's side."

The poll, conducted Thursday night and Friday, surveyed 1,368 registered voters who participated in a Times survey last week and agreed to be contacted after the Sept. 30 debate. Among the group, 75 vot-



Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, left, listens as President Bush answers a question during the presidential debate in Florida on Thursday.

ers said they had, in fact, watched the debate; it is their attitudes the poll reports.

In last week's Times Poll, Kerry trailed Bush among all registered voters by 49 percent to 45 percent. But the voters who watched the matchup preferred Kerry by 48 percent to 47 percent for Bush before the debate. After the debate, viewers divided almost exactly the same way, with 49 percent favoring Kerry, 47 percent Bush.

That tracks with other post-debate polls showing improvements in Kerry's image but generally little immediate change in the race. The exception is a Newsweek poll conducted Thursday night through Saturday in which Kerry led Bush, 49 percent to 45 percent among registered voters.



Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry, his wife Teresa Heinz Kerry, left, and actress Uma Thurman take part in Redbook's Mothers & Shakers awards luncheon in New York in September.

AP

Experts: Kerry win rests on female vote

BY NANCY BENAC
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Cynthia Moore, single mother, moderate Democrat — is the living embodiment of one of Sen. John Kerry's biggest challenges in the presidential race. There are things she doesn't like about President Bush, she says, but the president will get her vote on Nov. 2 because she thinks he'll do a better job of protecting her two daughters.

"Terrorism is something that scares me," says Moore, 34, of Watkins Glen, N.Y. "I like the security of knowing that if I was to get on a plane with my little girls, we would be a lot safer."

Kerry's strong performance in the first presidential debate did him no good with Moore — her mind made up, she didn't even waver.

Polling numbers show that Bush has made big strides among female voters in recent weeks. The Pew Research Center showed Bush and Kerry running about even among women in a poll taken Sept. 22-26, compared with a 10-point advantage for Kerry in August.

Democracy Corps, a group led by Democratic pollster Stan Greenberg and strategist James Carville, said its survey of 1,318 likely voters who watched the debate showed that Kerry's favorable ratings rose by 15 points among college-educated women and 11 points among older women, two groups that moved away from him since the Republican convention.

All sides agree that Kerry's election prospects are doomed if he doesn't regain ground with female voters, who tend to make up their minds later than men.

"It's just simply this: In order for Kerry to win, he's got to carry women," says Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew center.

Democratic pollster Doug Schoen, not affiliated with any campaign, sets the bar even higher: "If he doesn't win women by about 10 points, he will not be elected president."

Recent presidential elections have displayed a "gender gap" in which women, who make up about 52 percent of the electorate, lean more Democratic than

do men. In 1996, President Clinton beat Bob Dole by 16 points among women and broke even among men as he easily won re-election. In the neck-and-neck 2000 vote, Al Gore had an 11-point advantage over Bush among female voters while men favored Bush by about the same margin.

This time, the gender gap still exists, but the whole scale seems to have shifted in Bush's favor in recent weeks, in part simply because Kerry did more poorly across the board. An AP-Ipsos poll taken Sept. 20-22, for example, showed men favoring Bush by a 57-40 margin while women were about evenly split.

But the numbers also have given rise to speculation about a new bloc of voters known as "security moms," loosely defined as white, married women with children whose leanings in the race are tied to their concern about the impact of terrorism on their families.

Are these akin to the sought-after "soccer moms" of 1996, whose support for Democrats helped secure a second term for Clinton? "I hate the cutesy terms, but to a great extent that's exactly what they are," says Republican pollster Ed Goetz. "You have these security moms who are concerned about the war on terror, the war on Iraq and George W. Bush as the answer."

Evidence of women's concern about terrorism is sprinkled throughout recent polling data, although men also attach substantial importance to the issue.

Pew, for example, found that 79 percent of women rated concern about terrorism as a top priority, compared with 72 percent of men.

The center also found that women showed far greater interest than men in last month's siege at a school in Beslan, Russia, in which more than 330 people were killed, nearly half of them children.

Kohut says women have been feeling "cross pressured" in the current campaign — thinking Bush would do a better job than Kerry on terrorism but favoring Kerry on the economy and health care. Men split similarly, but by margins more favorable to Bush.

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"...security comes from within...and the security of all men is founded upon the security of the individual."

-M. Hall

Atlantic City casino staffers launch strike

Union members are seeking three-year contract, benefits

BY JOHN CURRAN

The Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Thousands of bartenders, cocktail waitresses and other workers donned ponchos and hats to walk picket lines in the rain Saturday, the second day of a strike against seven of Atlantic City's casino-hotels.

"We gotta' do what we gotta' do, rain or shine," said Bernard Bryant, 54, a room service cashier at Resorts Atlantic City. "We're not asking for any unreasonable demands."

Union members want a three-year contract, casino-funded health care and protection against the use of nonunion restaurant workers.

Their five-year contract expired Sept. 15.

Visitors, meanwhile, faced a weekend of noisy picket-line protests, closed restaurants and sometimes uneven service from executives and others performing unfamiliar tasks in the strikers' absence.

Of Atlantic City's 12 casinos, the strike affected seven: Bally's Atlantic City, Caesars Atlantic City, Harrah's Atlantic City, Showboat Hotel-Casino, the Atlantic City Hilton, Resorts Atlantic City and the Tropicana Casino and Resort.

No new talks were scheduled between the union and managers.

Card dealers, front-office executives and other workers not belonging to Local 54 substituted for the strikers. At Resorts, a vice president of hotel operations gave out valet parking tickets to customers.

Gamblers in town for the weekend had mixed feelings, with some expressing sympathy for the workers' demands and others criticizing the decision to go on strike.

"They're having trouble setting the tables and we had to eat off paper plates instead of dishes," said Ed Garrison, 59, of Burlington, Vt., who spent Friday night at Resorts Atlantic City with his wife Helen. "I'd like to see them settle it."



Lucille Ace, center, walks the picket line Friday near the Claridge Casino in Atlantic City, N.J. About 10,000 workers walked off the job and onto picket lines at seven of Atlantic City's 12 casinos, some in the middle of their shifts, vowing to stay out until the casinos meet their demands for a three-year contract, protection from subcontracted restaurant outlets and casino-funded health care.

FDA: Despite Vioxx move, most drugs are still reasonably safe

BY DIEDTRA HENDERSON

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Americans should feel reasonably safe taking government-approved prescription drugs — with a few caveats — even after a popular arthritis medication was pulled from the market, medical experts say.

Vioxx was the first prescription drug since 1961 to be taken off the market for safety reasons. Its maker, Merck & Co., cited an increased risk of heart attack and stroke in people who used the medication.

The withdrawal on Thursday came just weeks after the company defended the safety of the drug, which accounted for \$2.5 billion in worldwide sales in 2003, and

the Food and Drug Administration approved the use of Vioxx in children as young as 2 years old.

The problems with Vioxx raise questions about the agency's safety review process and the length of time it took Merck to pull the drug, observers say.

"No drug is fully safe," said Crystal Rice, an FDA spokeswoman. "Our job is to appropriately balance our decisions, based on the risk-benefit profile for a drug and the societal need and desire for new drugs." Rice said in an e-mail. "We believe that our

"I fear that FDA has gotten a little bit too cowed by industry demands to function as a good regulator."

Dr. Jerry Avorn
Associate professor,
Harvard Medical School

too few patients and for too short a time for worrisome side effects to surface.

Research from Harvard, Vanderbilt University and Merck's own clinical trial long ago uncovered concerns about the increased risk of heart attacks and high

actions regarding Vioxx were appropriate and consistent with our public health mission."

The FDA has come under intense pressure from the industry and elsewhere to approve drugs more quickly, despite clinical trials that some say enroll

blood pressure linked to Vioxx, said Dr. Jerry Avorn, who pointed to the issue in his book, "Powerful Medicines: The Benefits, Risks and Costs of Prescription Drugs."

"Why does it take this long for them to acknowledge the risk?" he asked.

"I fear that FDA has gotten a little bit too cowed by industry demands to function as a good regulator," said Avorn, an associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School who is affiliated with Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

An hospital spokeswoman, Kathleen K. Quinn, said the FDA gets "pressure from all sides — allegations that we're too fast, too slow. We make decisions on the basis of the science. We weigh the benefits against the risks ... and we make the tough calls."

Report: Salmon study ordered rewritten

The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Federal biologists evaluating the effects of shifting millions of gallons of water to Southern California from rivers in the north were ordered by their superiors to revise a conclusion that the plan would hurt endangered salmon, a newspaper reported Saturday.

At issue is a state-federal plan for the network of reservoirs and aqueducts that moves water to Southern California.

Biologists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration initially found that the water project would harm fish in many rivers in Northern California, including salmon in the American River. But NOAA administrators overruled the report's findings and supervised a rewriting of the analysis, according to documents obtained by The Sacramento Bee.

Some agency employees who asked not to be identified said some of the changes had no basis in science and will substantially weaken protections for endangered winter-run salmon, steelhead and other fish.

NOAA officials say the revisions were justified. Agency biologists made some errors and "unsubstantiated conclusions" in their original draft, said James Lecky, an agency administrator in Long Beach who ordered the revisions.

The project would pump more water through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to Southern California.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service gave its blessing to the plan in August, but NOAA biologists reached a different conclusion. A draft report from NOAA said the plan "is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of Sacramento winter-run Chinook salmon and Central Valley steelhead," as well as spring-run salmon.

An updated version, dated Sept. 27, no longer concludes that winter-run salmon or other fish could face extinction by the extra water diversions. The revised report also softens wording for how dam operators could avoid future impacts on fish and no longer calls for a minimum flow standard for the American River, as the original draft did.

Jaguar X-4 gets low marks on crash tests

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The 2004 Jaguar X-Type got the worst rating of any midsize sedan in side-impact crash tests conducted by the insurance industry.

The X-Type, which starts at \$31,000, fared worse than some less expensive cars, according to test results released Sunday by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

The institute's test measures the impact on dummies in the front and back seats of a sedan that is struck in the side by a sport utility vehicle traveling 31 mph. The government's test mimics a side-impact crash involving two cars.

Adrian Lund, the institute's chief operating officer, said the Jaguar's side air bags protected the dummies' heads, but the side of the vehicle was crushed and

could have caused severe injuries to the driver's torso.

Both the 2005 Mitsubishi Galant and the 2004 Saab 9-3 earned the institute's highest rating, along with the 2004 Lexus ES 350 and the 2004 Acura TL.

The Saab 9-3 and the Toyota RAV4, a small sport utility vehicle, are the only vehicles to earn the institute's best pick designation on both side-impact and front-crash tests, Lund said.

The Mitsubishi Galant's top rating was a significant improvement from 2004, when it was tested without side air bags and got the institute's lowest rating. In 2004, the vehicle had optional side air bags.

Twenty-seven percent of 2004 vehicles offered head-protecting side air bags as standard equipment. An additional 21 percent offered them as an option, the institute said.



Children stand on the bank of Lake Salvador in Crown Point, La., as they watch a Jefferson Parish Sheriff's patrol boat head to the scene of an accident. An airboat carrying 16 tourists through the swamps capsized Saturday, critically injuring several passengers.

Louisiana boat tour capsizes; 3 injured

BY STACEY P. JENKINS
The Associated Press

CROWN POINT, La. — An airboat carrying 16 tourists through the swamps here capsized Saturday evening, critically injuring three aboard, authorities said.

The accident occurred in the swamps surrounding Lake Salvador, about 22 miles south of New Orleans.

The Coast Guard initially said at least one person was dead and one missing, but later said that could not be confirmed.

Jefferson Parish sheriff's spokesman Col. John Fortunato said all passengers and the captain were found and taken to hospitals in the New Orleans area,

where two were in critical condition. Another person was upgraded to serious, officials said.

There was no immediate word on the identities of the victims.

Tourists flock to the swamps to see wildlife that includes alligators — often drawn into sight by chicken meat dangling from poles on the boats.

The capsized boat — a flat-bottomed aluminum vessel powered by a large fan mounted on the stern — belongs to Louisiana Swamp Tours.

Company owner Milton Walker Jr. rushed to the scene Saturday evening.

"I've always felt as though we've been safe in operation," he said. "I never thought something like this could happen."

Search for missing men called off

BY KIM CURTIS
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Two Northern California women are convinced that if anyone could survive a plane crash in the Alaskan wilderness, it would be their husbands.

"They had luggage, they had food, they had warm clothes, flashlights," Barbara Koenig said of her husband and his friends, who disappeared Sept. 20 as their floatplane headed to a fishing lodge. "We still have a ray of hope."

Aboard the plane were Lloyd "Dick" Koenig, 69, of Pleasanton; Jerry Balmer, 61, of Auburn; Jim Murphy, 65, of Sequim, Wash.; Murphy's twin brother, Joe Murphy, of Bremerton, Wash.; and the pilot, Eric Johnson, 26, of Sitka, Alaska.

"I still have the feeling that they're alive. I don't know if it's denial or wishful thinking or what," Jackie Balmer said Saturday from the couple's home east of Sacramento in the Sierra foothills. "If anybody can walk out, these guys can."

The U.S. Coast Guard called off its search Wednesday after nearly 200 hours of searching. It had



Barbara Koenig's husband, Lloyd "Dick" Koenig, disappeared with four other men in the Alaskan wilderness Sept. 20 when their plane failed to arrive at a fishing lodge. Although the U.S. Coast Guard has called off its official search, Koenig believes her husband may still be alive.

"We still have a ray of hope," she said Saturday from her home in Pleasanton, Calif. The company that owns the plane is continuing the search.

used all its available crews and aircraft, including night-vision equipment.

"They felt that they had exhausted every possible effort to locate any survivors," Coast Guard Petty Officer Thomas McKenzie said.

But Harris Aircraft Services of Sitka, which owns the Beaver floatplane and has employed Johnson since spring, had no plans to give up the search.

"No one has found a thing," dispatcher Dan DeLong said.

"That's very unusual. Normally, you'd find something, a piece of wreckage, something."

He said at least four planes have been continuing the search.

Fishing boats and ships in the area have been told to watch for anything unusual on their sonar and a dozen volunteers have been searching on foot over rough and heavily wooded terrain, DeLong said.

"Hope dwindles, but it's there," DeLong said.

The plane took off from Sitka, on the west side of Baranof Island near Juneau in southeast Alaska.

Bad weather forced it to take the long route over water instead of heading directly to the lodge over land, DeLong said. The short route is about 20 air miles and takes approximately 12 minutes, while the long route is about 100 air miles taking about 50 minutes, DeLong said.

The passengers were at the start of a weeklong fishing trip they'd been planning for six months, Barbara Koenig said. Jerry Balmer, Lloyd Koenig and Jim Murphy were longtime members of California chapters of the Ironworkers International Union.

Murphy moved to Washington from Sacramento about two years ago.

Koenig said her husband loved the outdoors, boating and airplanes.

"When airplanes flew over the house, he'd run out to see what kind it was," she said, adding he'd been eager to visit Alaska for years.

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- 1724 Lyme Disease Foundation
- 1745 Marrow Foundation, The
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IN THE WORLD

Joint operation nabbs alleged ETA members

Two top suspected Basque separatist leaders, 16 others captured in French-Spanish raid

The Associated Press

BAYONNE, France — Two of Spain's most wanted alleged terrorists and at least 16 other suspected members of the armed Basque separatist group ETA were captured Sunday in a vast French-Spanish police operation, authorities said.

Mikel Abizua Iriarte and Soledad Iparaguirre, a couple who had been on the run since 1993, were arrested near Pau in southwestern France, French investigators and Spanish authorities said. The pair, both aged 43, were with their son.

They had false papers and refused to answer questions but were identified by police agents,

investigators said. Police also sent copies of their fingerprints to Spain to confirm their identities.

ETA has since the 1960s carried out bombings and assassinations in Spain to get an independent Basque state. The armed group is classified as a terrorist organization by the European Union and the United States. It has claimed or has been blamed for more than 800 deaths.

ETA militants have long crossed into peaceful Basque provinces of southwest France to take refuge or make plans. French and Spanish authorities closely cooperate to hunt them down.

Mikel Abizua, who uses the alias

Mikel Antza, is thought to have become a top ETA leader 12 years ago after police devastated the separatist organization by arresting most of its senior members.

Abizua managed to escape another police raid last April that netted an ETA logistics chief, Felix Ignacio Etxarza.

Iparaguirre, who uses the alias "Anboto," is considered one of ETA's leading female members.

She comes from a family of ETA militants and became very active after her boyfriend was killed in a police raid when he was aged 20. She allegedly participated in dozens of attacks from 1984 through 1992 that together

killed 15 people and injured more than 20 injured.

French authorities said all but one of the 16 other suspected ETA members were arrested in towns between Pau and Bayonne in southwest France.

The other suspect was arrested in the northern Spanish city of Burgos. He is thought to have planted bombs for ETA at power installations in September.

Spain's Interior Ministry put the number of suspects in custody at 21. The discrepancy with the French figure could not immediately be explained.

"The operation is very important," said Spanish Interior Minister Jose Antonio Alonso.

"No less than seven homes have been searched and police have seized plenty of documentation, weapons and explosives, in important quantities."

"The arrests are part of an excellent collaboration between Spain and France in anti-terrorism policies," the minister added.

Some 140 police agents took part in the raids. Seven weapons caches uncovered contained rocket launchers, assault rifles, munitions and explosives. Police also seized cash and documents, the French interior ministry said.

The raids came on the heels of the arrests earlier last week in Spain of five people who were suspected of helping ETA members slip across the border into France.

Disillusioned Bosnians stay clear of polls

BY ADA CERKEZ-BOSNIAN

The Associated Press

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Disillusioned by officials' failure to improve Bosnia's economy, many voters stayed away from municipal elections on Saturday, while preliminary results indicated that the three nationalist parties were in the lead.

The election for new councils and mayors in 142 municipalities was the first post-war vote fully funded and organized by Bosnian authorities. It was the first in which mayors of Bosnian cities will be directly elected.

Despite the electoral advances in the former Yugoslav republic, recent opinion polls predicted less than half of the more than 2.5 million eligible voters would participate, something political analyst Igor Gajic predicted would benefit the nationalist parties.

About 45 percent of the electorate voted, according to preliminary results, a record-low turnout that was 21 percentage points lower than in the last municipal elections, held in 2000.

Preliminary results from 46 of the municipalities indicated that most votes went to the three nationalist parties: the Party for Democratic Action, a Muslim bloc; the Serb Democratic Party and the Croat Democratic Union, which have been leading Bosnia since 1990.

Preliminary results for the remainder of the municipalities were expected late Sunday and final results within a month.

"I can't see the difference between the candidates," said Marko Peric, 63, from Mostar, who was not planning to vote. "I'm sick of politics."

Voters choosing among 70 parties, 18 coalitions, 35 independent lists of candidates and 144 independent candidates.

Reliable pollsters in Bosnia generally steer clear of forecasting results, but nationalist parties usually win in rural areas, while non-nationalist groups do better in cities.

A non-nationalist party, the Social Democratic Party, won municipal and general elections four years ago in Muslim-domi-



Bosnian Muslim women refugees from Srebrenica wait in a line to cast their ballots at a polling station in Tuzla, 43 miles north of Sarajevo, on Saturday.

Serbian runoff elections

BELGRADE, Serbia-Montenegro — Loyalists to Slobodan Milosevic were poised to win at least one city Sunday in municipal runoff elections.

The trouble-prone Balkan republic was electing mayors for four of its largest cities, including the capital, Belgrade, and Novi Sad, the provincial capital of Vojvodina.

In those races, candidates from the ultranationalist Serbian Radical Party were running neck-to-neck against pro-Western members of the Democratic Party.

Slovenians go to the polls

LJUBLJANA, Slovenia — Slovenians were voting Sunday in parliamentary elections that could snap the center-left's grip on power held virtually since the country gained independence from the old Yugoslav federation in 1991.

The Liberal Democratic Party, which led the country of 2 million into the Europe-

an Union and NATO earlier this year, has seen its support drop from 36 percent in 2000 to 24 percent shortly before the vote.

Opinion polls show incumbent Prime Minister Anton Rop's center-left party in a dead heat with Janez Janša's center-right Democratic Party coming into the nationwide ballot.

Abkhazia presidential race

TBILISI, Georgia — Five candidates squared off Sunday in an election for the presidency of Abkhazia, all sharing a commitment to keep their breakaway region from submitting to Georgian rule.

Prime Minister Raul Khadzimba, backed by outgoing President Vladislav Ardzinba and by neighboring Russia, was the front-runner, but opposition candidate Sergei Bagapsh posed a strong challenge.

The turnout was high, with more than 30 percent of the region's 121,000 eligible voters casting ballots during the first three hours of the vote.

From The Associated Press

eyes of the average citizen, all parties have become the same."

The three main nationalist parties led their ethnic groups throughout the 1992-95 Bosnian war between Muslims, Serbs and Croats. The war ended with a 1995 peace agreement that recognized the country within its original borders, but internally divided it along ethnic lines into a Muslim-Croat federation and a Serb republic.

Germany's lagging east mars annual celebration

Reunification anniversary eclipsed by welfare reforms

BY JOCHEN WIESIGEL

The Associated Press

ERFURT, Germany — German leaders celebrated the 14th anniversary of national reunification Sunday, with calls for Germans to accept painful social welfare cuts amid fears that the former communist east may never catch up with the more prosperous west.

The west has provided billions to rebuild infrastructure and prop up living standards since reunification on Oct. 3, 1990, a year after the fall of the Berlin Wall. But a summer of protests — mainly in the east — against a slate of unprecedented unemployment benefit cuts had renewed debate about the inequities between the nation's regions.

With the economy mired in stagnation, many east Germans are bitter that promises of prosperity have failed to materialize.

President Horst Koehler tried to take the focus off that debate in a ceremony in the eastern city of Erfurt, but warned that Germans would have to learn to live with welfare reform.

"We cannot accept unemployment anywhere, no matter if it is the north, south, west or east," he said.

But "when can we bid farewell to the fallacy that we can keep pushing problems into the future through ever higher national debt? ... I am convinced that we can and will conquer this mountain" of challenges.

Protesters jeered Koehler in the east German city of Bitterfeld last week, angry at comments he made in a magazine interview in mid-September in which he suggested that standards of living in the east cannot realistically be brought up to those of the western border.

He drew praise from some, however, for injecting honesty into Germany's view of its eastern states.

Gaza campaign expands

BY IBRAHIM BARZAK

The Associated Press

JEBALIYA REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza Strip — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon vowed Sunday to expand Israel's deadliest offensive in Gaza in four years and to stay as long as needed to stop Palestinian rocket attacks.

An Israeli aircraft struck a group of Palestinian militants in Gaza City, killing two, just moments after they fired a rocket at Israel from the back of a donkey cart. Before dawn, tanks and bulldozers razed houses, factories and a kindergarten in the northern Gaza Strip.

And in the southern part, tanks and bulldozers opened a new front, briefly moving from a Jewish settlement into the Khan Yunis refugee camp, residents said.

So far, 55 Palestinians and three Israeli soldiers have been killed in the offensive launched by Israel after a Palestinian rocket attack on Wednesday killed two preschoolers in the town of Sderot. Israel poured 2,000 troops into northern Gaza — seizing an area five miles deep and wading into Jebaliya, the biggest Palestinian refugee camp and one of the most crowded places in the world.

Sharon said he would keep troops in northern Gaza indefinitely to prevent Palestinian rocket fire and shelling. The Palestinian attacks have sharpened opposition to Sharon's plan to withdraw troops and settlers from the Gaza Strip.

"It is necessary to bring about a complete end to the firing of rock-



Israeli soldiers unload from an armored vehicle at a military staging area on Sunday after returning from the Jebaliya refugee camp on the northern border of the Gaza Strip. Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon warned that his army's largest operation in Gaza in four years would expand as much as necessary to stop Palestinian rocket attacks.

ets on Sderot and other towns that border the Gaza Strip. The current situation cannot continue," Sharon told Israeli Radio.

"We have to expand ... the areas of operation in order to get the rocket launchers out of the range of Israeli towns," he added.

Currently, the homemade, low-explosive Qassam rockets used by Palestinian militants have a range of about five miles. On Saturday, Hamas militants said they were expanding the Qassam's range and threatened to strike the city of Ashkelon, nine miles from the Gaza border.

Sharon told Israel's Army Radio the operation "is not a short thing. The forces will have to remain there as long as this danger exists."

"We must also operate to stop the shelling of Israeli communities in Gaza now and during the evacuation," he said.

Israeli officials said the military had no intention of setting up a long-term presence in northern Gaza. "The length of the operation will be determined by its results," senior Defense Ministry official Amos Gilad told Army Radio.

Blasts in India target utilities

Wave of separatist attacks leaves more than 50 dead, 100 wounded

BY WASBIR HUSSAIN

The Associated Press

GAUHAATI, India — Suspected separatists bombed a power line, a gas pipeline, a tea plantation and a crowded marketplace in northeastern India on Sunday, intensifying a campaign of violence that has killed more than 50 people and wounded at least 100 during the last two days.

The violence, affecting the states of Nagaland and Assam, was among the deadliest to hit the region, where more than three dozen insurgent groups have been active. They include one of Asia's longest-running separatist conflicts, dating to shortly before India gained independence from Britain in 1947.

As troops patrolled streets in Nagaland Sunday, a bomb exploded in Dhekiaigula, a village about 100 miles north of Gauhati, the Assam state capital. Police said 15 people were wounded.

Also Sunday, suspected rebels targeted a gas pipeline with a land mine blast near the village of Kura in western Assam, 25 miles west of Gauhati, police said. The extent of the damage was unknown.

Also in Borhat, a tea garden where a bus was killed and two others seriously injured when suspected guerrillas detonated a bomb at

their plantation, Press Trust of India news agency said.

Two suspected rebels of the outlawed National Democratic Front of Bodoland were killed when explosives they were carrying detonated in Assam's Sonitpur district, PTI said.

Another bomb exploded at a shop in Dabosal in western Assam, wounding its owner, said A.K. Bhutani, the district magistrate. And in the nearby town of Chitra, suspected militants blew up an electrical transmission tower, cutting the power supply to the area, Bhutani said.

Federal Home Minister Shivraj Patil visited Assam and Nagaland on Sunday to assess the violence, which began Saturday when suspected separatists detonated a bomb at a packed railway station and sprayed gunfire into bustling markets.

Nagaland's death toll stood at 28 on Sunday, while Assam's rose to 25. No group claimed responsibility and it wasn't clear whether the nine attacks in Nagaland and Assam states were linked.

But Inspector General Khagen Sarma, the top police official of Assam state, told The Associated Press he "cannot rule out" the possible involvement of the outlawed National Democratic Front of Bodoland, a tribal separatist group that is active in the region.

S. Korea rebuked for nuclear testing

BY SOO-JEONG LEE

The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea must not conduct more nuclear experiments without notifying the United Nations because any secret nuclear activity, however small, is a matter of "serious concern," the U.N. nuclear chief said Sunday.

The comments in Seoul by Mohamed ElBaradei, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, came after North Korea warned that the South Korean experiments had disrupted a dialogue between the two Koreas.

"It will be impossible to expect any development of inter-Korean relations unless the truth about South Korea's secret nuclear experiments is probed," the North Korean news agency KCNA said Sunday, citing an unidentified Pyongyang official.

The two Koreas have conducted a fitful reconciliation process since a 2000 summit between their presidents. Family reunions, Cabinet-level talks and economic and cultural exchanges have

been held, but their militaries remain on alert along the tense border.

The controversy over South Korea's experiments has also threatened to further disrupt troubled efforts to persuade North Korea to dismantle its suspected nuclear weapons programs.

ElBaradei was in South Korea to take part in the Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs. But he also planned to meet with several top officials during his trip.

His visit follows Seoul's recent admissions that it conducted a plutonium-based nuclear experiment more than 20 years ago and a uranium-enrichment experiment in 2000. South Korea says the experiments were purely research but has acknowledged it should have informed the IAEA.

"Any undeclared activities is a matter of serious concern for me," ElBaradei told reporters upon arrival. "However, as far as I know now, these have been small experiments. We just wanted to make sure these were experiments and that there were nothing more than these experiments."

Cents and Sensibility

Money tip of the day

Vote by absentee ballot

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — Just because you won't be near a polling place on Election Day is no reason to throw away one of your greatest assets — your vote.

You can apply for an absentee ballot if you:

- Are an American citizen currently residing outside the United States.
- Are a member of the armed forces.

- Have a disability that prevents you from voting at the polling booth.

- Are registered to vote, but will be absent on Election Day from the county in which you are registered.

Rules for applying for an absentee ballot vary by state. Applications are available at your county's board of elections and at your county clerk's office upon arrival. "However, as far as I know now, these have been small experiments. We just wanted to make sure these were experiments and that there were nothing more than these experiments."

A family member may apply for an absentee ballot in your name if you cannot apply for it yourself in person. The ballot will be mailed to you at your current address.

You can register for an absentee ballot online if you are:

- An American citizen currently residing outside the United States.

- A member of the armed forces currently stationed in Europe or the Pacific.

■ Many states accept online absentee-ballot registration. Those that do not are Arizona, Arkansas, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nevada, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington and Wyoming. To request an absentee ballot online, visit www.declareyourself.com. The Web site guides users through the steps of requesting an absentee ballot from their home state.

If you need assistance completing your absentee ballot, check your state's guidelines before mailing in the ballot. Some states require the voter to sign a return or other confirmation of the assistance rendered.

Be sure to mail back your absentee ballot with no later than Oct. 11, Defense Department officials say.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro	\$1.7377
British pound	\$1.85
Japanese yen (Oct. 4)	\$80.00
South Korean won (Oct. 2)	1,118.00

Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	1.3777
British pound	\$1.7388
Canada (Dollar)	0.6236
Denmark (Krone)	6.4607
Egypt (Pound)	6.2201

Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7959
India (Rupee)	47.8333
Iceland (Krona)	70.7575
Israel (Sheqel)	1.6607
Japan (Yen)	110.40
Kuwait (Dinar)	6.7148
Norway (Krone)	6.4607
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.75
Switzerland (Franc)	1.6607
South Korea (Won)	1,117.50
Taiwan (Dollar)	41.4730
Thailand (Baht)	1.4730

U.S. dollar exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance. For Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, for nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in London), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are bank rates provided for reference when buying U.S. dollars in foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.

PRECIOUS METALS

New York Mercile close	
Silver	\$419.50
Gold	\$419.50

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	4.75
Discount rate	2.75
3-month Treasury market rate	4.75
3-month bill	1.68
30-year Treasury	5.25
Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America, Bloomberg.com	

OPINION

Kerry candidacy stronger after first debate

President Bush and Sen. John Kerry faced very different challenges when they met Thursday night for their first debate, but only Kerry seemed to recognize exactly what he needed to do.

David Broder



The Democratic timeline's task was to straighten out the internal contradictions that had facilitated the successful Republican assault on him as a flip-flopper. He bent every effort to the urgent need to appear straightforward and strong — keeping his head straight, his answers short and his message clear. For most of the night, he was the aggressor, pressing the case for a change of command in the war on terrorism, which has been Bush's strongest suit.

Bush had a different assignment. A Kerry weakened by months of Republican rhetoric painting him as a vacillating wimp was far less of a threat to a second term than the disturbing news bulletins and television pictures from the Iraq battlefield. Bush's need was to reconcile his upbeat rhetoric about the coming of a new democratic era in Iraq with the bloody warfare that has pinned 140,000 American troops in that misery-laden country with no end in sight.

In 90 minutes before the biggest audience of the campaign, Bush not only failed to do that, he barely tried. And that omission leaves him at risk to future events as the insurgency in Iraq gathers momentum.

Instead of dealing with his greatest vulnerability, Bush did what was predictable. He repeated the favorite examples his campaign has gleaned from the abundant con-

traditions since he first voted to authorize the use of force against Saddam Hussein back in 2002. It is a catalogue that has become familiar through millions of dollars of Republican ads, and by the time Bush had used the same phrase seven times — citing Kerry's dismissal of Iraq as the “wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time” — there was a rote quality to the recital that reduced its sting.

On a day when the headlines carried news of more than 40 deaths from insurgent gunfire — most of them children — Bush pronounced himself “realistic but optimistic” about the course of events in Iraq. Kerry briefly challenged that picture, arguing that “it’s getting worse by the day.” But Bush never responded directly, and estimable moderator Jim Lehrer inexplicably failed to ask the president to reconcile the glaring contradiction between his White House version of events in Iraq and the reality of the growing resistance.

I have argued for a long time that Bush's real opponent in this campaign is not John Kerry but the Iraqi insurgency and, unfortunately, that is turning out to be the case. Bush did nothing during the debate to defuse the threat.

But Kerry did himself some good by refusing to be defensive about his checkered history on Iraq or attempting yet one more convoluted explanation of his incoherent past positions. Instead, he focused on future steps. His preferred solution for Iraq, starting with a “summit” of European and Middle East nations to drum up more international peacekeeping forces, may be a long shot, but when Bush failed to challenge Kerry's contention that the president's plan is simply “more of the same,” the gambit did not seem totally implausible.

I thought I saw Bush wince a bit when Kerry recalled that the president's father had not tried to topple Saddam Hussein at



the end of the Gulf War of 1991 because he said “there was no viable exit strategy and ... our troops would be occupiers in a bitterly hostile land.”

“That’s exactly where we find ourselves today,” Kerry said. And though he vowed he would not pull out of Iraq without a victory, the implication of his words is clear: If Kerry wins, the future of Iraq will be left to Iraqis.

The debate confirmed that Kerry is simply incapable of appealing to people in personal terms. The kind of emotion Bush displayed when talking about Missy Johnson,

the war widow he had comforted in Charlotte, N.C., just does not come from Kerry.

But he succeeded Thursday night in separating the war in Iraq from the war on terrorism — something Bush does not want to let happen — and, for the moment at least, his demeanor made it believable for him to say, “I’ve never wavered in my life. And I’ve never wavered in my life.”

For a man who was on the ropes a couple weeks ago, it was at least enough to keep the fight going.

David Broder is a member of Washington Post Writers Group.

FDA's weakness made loss of Vioxx more painful

Los Angeles Times

Merck & Co. said its surprise decision Thursday to withdraw the arthritis drug Vioxx from the U.S. market was used by about 2 million people worldwide.

— was driven by recent evidence that the drug's adverse side effects outweighed any potential benefits. But that wasn't really news. Though the new study was more comprehensive than past research because it looked at patients over the course of three years, research since November 2000 has suggested that those who take Vioxx face a heart attack risk four to five times greater than those who take older, equally effective arthritis treatments such as ibuprofen and naproxen.

So why is Merck recalling the drug now? One can only speculate, but it may have less to do with side effects outweighing benefits than with legal liabilities outweighing profits. Merck faces several lawsuits, including a class action filed Thursday alleging the company made false and misleading statements about Vioxx's safety. Whatever the company's motives, its decision to withdraw Vioxx should cast scrutiny on at least two problems inherent in the nation's system for assessing and monitoring drug safety.

The first is misleading ads. Vioxx and a

similar drug from Pfizer Inc., Celebrex, have been touted as “super-aspirin” in numerous TV commercials that have downplayed their known cardiovascular risks.

Such commercials show how far the Food and Drug Administration has slipped in enforcing its own rules. When the agency determines a drug company has made a misleading ad, it first issues a warning letter, then imposes a fine if the

ad is not pulled. But the number of warning letters has dropped precipitously since the Bush administration took power, from 82 in 2000 to 24 in 2003.

The second problem is the nation's almost exclusive reliance on drug companies to police the safety and efficacy of their own drugs.

Although the FDA requires drug makers to demonstrate the superiority of their medications to placebos before they can release them, the agency lets drug companies monitor their own products' dangers after they've reached the shelves.

The FDA could help solve these problems not only by enforcing its own rules but by requiring doctors and hospitals to report “adverse events” when patients use drugs. Big government payers such as Medicaid or Medicare could pay only for expensive new drugs that are demonstrably superior to older, cheaper ones.

The withdrawal of Vioxx caused Merck's market value to sink by almost \$27 billion. The FDA's current hands-off approach to drug companies doesn't just endanger consumers, it hurts investors — who shouldn't be caught by surprise over a drug whose dangers have long been clear.

[T]he FDA ... lets drug companies monitor their own products' dangers after they've reached the shelves.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY





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Snake closes show

TX HOUSTON — No, it's not a 3-D creature feature. A Houston movie theater — one that was showing "Anacondas" among other films — has shut down while workers hunt for an 8-foot snake.

A maintenance worker said he saw a snake as thick as a man's arm slithering along a wall, said Terrell FUSA, a spokeswoman for Cinemark USA, Inc.

"As soon as he saw it, he left," she said. "I think everyone who was working left."

When the owners of the 16-screen theater heard of it, they closed the place and brought in snake experts.

"We have looked throughout the theater and we haven't found a snake yet," said Ramon Cardenas, owner of Critter Control of Houston, a company that specializes in wildlife control.

It's unclear if the animal escaped or remains inside. Based on the description, the snake people believe it could be a Burmese python.

Houston animal control officers also searched but found no trace of the snake. "Just because we didn't see one doesn't mean it's not there," Houston Health and Human Services Department spokeswoman Kathy Barton said.

Bar owners go to court

CT HARTFORD — Bar and restaurant owners went to court claiming they are denied equal protection under a year-old state law that bans smoking in their establishments, but allows it in private clubs. A Hartford Superior Court judge said he needs more information before making any rulings on the lawsuit. The bar owners say they are losing business to the clubs, and Connecticut's two Indian-run casinos.

Not egg-actly the same

WI EGG HARBOR — Plans to re-enact the egg battle that led to the naming of this town in 1825 were simply too true to be good, state officials have decided.

The Department of Natural Resources said Saturday's event must use plastic eggs, not the real thing, in depicting the historic egg-throwing battle between crews of two boats docked in the harbor on Lake Michigan's Green Bay.

Organizer George Bisbee initially said he wanted to use 3,000 real eggs to re-enact the fight, although he later said he had exaggerated the number.

"It just got so controversial, and I know there are some concerned citizens out there," Bisbee said. "I had plastic eggs as a backup plan all along, so there will be no environmental impact."

After Bisbee announced his plans for a true-to-life egg fight, shoreline property owners and others called the DNR to complain, said Tom Hansen, DNR warden supervisor in Green Bay.

"We've asked that the real eggs not be used, and we will be prepared to enforce that request," Hansen said.

Hansen said eggs are breeding grounds for bacteria, and the invasive zebra mussels growing on the bottom of the bay would feast on the calcium shells.

The original egg fight among sailors was apparently a spur-of-the-moment release of tension, as recounted by Green Bay di-



arist Elizabeth Baird, who happened to be sailing by on another ship.

The egg fight and other attractions will raise money for local scholarship funds.

Help amid Medicaid cuts

MS JACKSON — Gov. Haley Barbour says Medicaid workers have contacted most of the 48,000 Mississippians being cut from a program to help them apply for free or discounted drugs. Attorney General Jim Hood says he'll ask a judge to give lawyers time to determine whether the state gave sufficient notice about other health care options available to those being cut. Barbour proposed the cuts to save the Medicaid program millions of dollars. Some lawmakers say they regret approving the cuts.

Presidential wishes

PA JOHNSTOWN — Ten-year-old Amber Easterbrook says she has three main goals in life: going to heaven, taking a trip to Hawaii and meeting President Bush.

For now, at least, Amber is trying to get the third goal taken care of first.

Amber, of Richland Township, wasn't able to go with her mother, Sherri Easterbrook, to Bush's rally in neighboring Johnstown on Sept.

9. So she gave her mother a note she wrote for Bush, which her mom was able to press into Bush's hand as he greeted supporters.

"Amber wrote that she was a fourth-grader at Johnstown Christian School and that she would pray that Mr. Bush would be re-elected," Easterbrook said.

Sherri Easterbrook didn't expect much in return, because she realized that there was no return address on the letter.

But Bush sent a handwritten letter to Amber in care of her school, which she received last week.

The letter, dated Sept. 12, said: "Dear Amber: Thanks for your kind letter. I wish we could meet sometime. Please give your family my very best wishes... Best wishes always, George Bush."

Van a tall order

IN SHELBYVILLE — Sandy Allen now has enough money to buy her dream van — one big enough to accommodate the 7-foot, 7½-inch frame she has as the world's tallest woman.

Less than a week after announcement of an effort to raise the \$5,000 needed to buy the used van, donations have reached about \$7,000, said Bonnie Shehan, a friend of Allen's.

"People from all over the country are sending money for Sandy," Shehan said.

Shehan had been Allen's unofficial chauffeur, using her minivan to drive Allen places, until the van was stolen. But while Allen said she was glad to leave the nursing home where she lives from time to time, Shehan's van was cramped.

Allen's friends Linda and Larry Fox had seen a van in a used car lot in the city about 25 miles southeast of Indianapolis that they thought would be perfect for Allen.

"When they told me about it, I thought, 'God, this'll never happen. I'm the eternal pessimist,'" said Allen, who is recognized by Guinness World Records as the tallest living woman.

The 49-year-old Allen said she was surprised by the number of people who contributed to the van fund.

"I just didn't know that there were that many people out there who cared," she said.

Shehan said the van account would remain open and that any extra money will be used for the van's insurance and upkeep.

Trees creating danger

WY CODY — Trees killed from wildfires in 1988 in the Shoshone National Forest are falling, blocking trails and creating danger for backcountry hikers and hunters. Since many of the trails are in wilderness, no power tools are allowed — only crosscut saws and axes. Thousands of trees have fallen since last winter, and some trails have been cleared more than once, officials said.

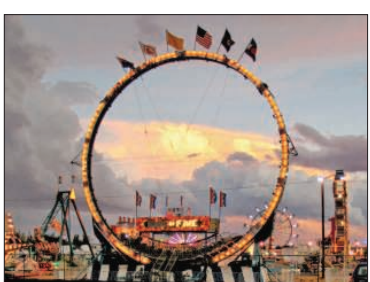
Minimum wage rises

ME AUGUSTA — An estimated 25,000 Mainers got a raise when the state minimum wage goes up a dime to \$6.35 an hour.

Legislation enacted this spring also provides for the state minimum to go up again on Oct. 1, 2005, to \$6.50. Maine is one of 12 states with a minimum higher than the \$5.15 set by the federal government.



Exciting art Li Thompson puffs up the origami crane she made at Notre Dame de Sion School in Kansas City, Mo., after she and fellow students learned how to make the paper sculptures from a visiting Japanese artist.



Gloomy ride Clouds from an earlier storm drift over the Southern New Mexico State Fair near Las Cruces, N.M.



Invasion of the massive cow A car makes its way down a hill after visiting Liane Sue, the world's largest Holstein dairy cow, made out of fiberglass and sitting on a perch overlooking the Interstate 94 exit at New Salem, N.D.



Peek-a-boo

A fossa pup takes a quick peek under the watchful eye of its dad (mother) at the San Diego Zoo. Fossas are found only in the forests of Madagascar, where they are the island's largest carnivores. They are now considered an endangered species.



Artistic imagination

Mich., will look like in the spring.

Anna Clifton, 3, left, and Emma Philip, 4, draw what they hope the flower garden they planted at Traverse Heights Elementary School in Traverse City, Mich., will look like in the spring.



Band reflection

Members of the Virginia High School marching band are reflected in the polished surface of Andy Holien's French horn as he joins fellow band members in practicing the band's homecoming half-time show in Virginia, Minn.



Under the sea

Jim Berke hunts for urchins along the ocean floor off the coast of York, Maine.



I see you!

Luke Crumpton peeks through an opening in a translucent tube on the playground at Lee Academy in Clarksdale, Miss.

Waste storage basins dry

ID IDAHO FALLS — Four underwater nuclear waste storage basins used for more than 50 years at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory are dry. The basins held nuclear waste, plus 770,000 gallons of contaminated water from storage of spent fuel from the Three Mile Island nuclear accident.

The waste is now in dry storage and the water was allowed to evaporate. An epoxy fixative prevents any remaining contaminants from being airborne, clean-up officials said.

Dog gives warning

IN CROWN POINT — Lake County Animal Control officials are crediting a dog with warning them about dangerous smoke coming from an area that contained 10 other dogs.

April Godra, a shelter official, said she knew something wasn't right when Foxie, a normally quiet collie, would not stop barking as Godra made her rounds through the northwestern Indiana kennels.

Then she noticed Foxie looking at the door leading to the garage where the dogs were.

"I opened the door, and smoke started billowing in," Godra said. "I said, 'Oh my God, Foxie, you're just like Lassie. You saved us!'"

A burning motor on the washing machine caused the smoke.

Godra said if it weren't for Foxie, the dogs likely would have died.

"She saved us. She's our baby," Godra said.

Bureau to get grants

KS TOPEKA — The Kansas Bureau of Investigation will get more than \$521,000 in federal grants to help its crime labs, said Eric Melgren, the U.S. attorney for Kansas. The state agency says the money will be used to identify and test backlogged DNA evidence. The FBI has labs in Topeka, Great Bend, Pittsburg and Kansas City, Kan.

Shark sets record

CA MONTEREY — Thought it was safe to go back in the water? Turns out, 16 days wasn't enough.

A young great white shark reached a milestone as it began its 17th day on exhibit at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Notorious for their inability to thrive in captivity, no other great whites are currently on display anywhere in the world — and none has ever been kept on exhibit for more than 16 days.

Commercial halibut fishermen inadvertently snagged the young female shark off the coast of Huntington Beach in late August. It had been kept in a 4 million-gallon pen off the Southern California coast until Sept. 14, when it headed north by truck — an unmarked, 3,000-gallon shark tank on wheels — to its new home.

The aquarium is keeping the shark on long-term exhibit in its 1 million-gallon Outer Bay tank, which contains 75 other large fish and turtles. The tank is a little larger than one Olympic-size swimming pool. More than 80,000 people have already seen the shark at its new home.

The shark is 4 feet, 4 inches long and weighs 62 pounds. It could

grow to about 21 feet and weigh more than a ton.

Of the almost 40 great white sharks kept at aquariums over the years, most were unintentionally caught in commercial fishing gear and brought directly to aquariums. They either died or were freed when they wouldn't eat.

Nobody knows why they don't thrive in captivity, although many marine biologists speculate that the predators can't handle the stress of being captured and contained.

Judge rules on permit

NY ALBANY — A state judge is voiding the long overdue permit of a power plant on the Hudson River blamed for killing tens of millions of fish with its old cooling system. The Danskammer Electric Generation Plant in Newburgh will continue in operation until a higher court decides the case. The plant is still operating 12 years after the five-year permit expired.

Census: Decline in kids

SD SIOUX FALLS — The latest Census figures show big declines in the number of young children in rural counties between 2000 to 2003. The change will hit school districts first, says retired economics professor James Satterlee. Eventually entire communities will feel the impact, he says. Lower birth rates and the loss of young couples of childbearing years are the main reasons for the decline.

Minorities flock to county

AL CLAYTON — Hispanic workers have flocked to Alabama's growing poultry industry, changing the profile of rural areas such as Barbour County, where minorities are now in the majority. The Hispanic population in the southeast Alabama county grew 50 percent between 2000 and 2003 as a chicken processing plant in Clayton expanded. The black population grew less than 1 percent, and the white population declined 3.7 percent, according to Census figures.

Pavilion moving

PA PHILADELPHIA — The glass-and-steel pavilion that held the Liberty Bell until last year is moving from Independence National Historical Park to a small business college in the Philadelphia suburbs.

The decision by the American College, which trains professionals in the insurance and financial-services industries, to install the pavilion on its 35-acre campus in Bryn Mawr spurs the architecturally significant structure from demolition.

The pavilion, designed in 1976, is considered one of the finest works of architect Romaldo Giurgola. At the American College, it will become the entrance for an underground conference center and museum and house a replica of the Liberty Bell.

The U.S. General Services Administration, the agency responsible for federal property, selected American over at least two other institutions that vied for the landmark because of the college's proximity to Philadelphia and its connection to Giurgola, who laid out the campus and designed its three main buildings.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

Cosby pledges concert proceeds

Comedian and actor Bill Cosby has pledged at least \$1 million for a planned U.S. National Slavery Museum.

Cosby announced he would donate proceeds from 10 concerts to the museum effort, or between \$1 million and \$1.5 million, museum officials estimate. Cosby sits on the museum's board.

"We need history," Cosby told an audience in Fredericksburg, Va., where the museum is planned to open in 2007.

"We need proof for our children ... to see the strength of their ancestors," Cosby said.

The museum plans fund-raising activities in conjunction with each concert and hopes to raise \$20 million, said Ed Wegel, chairman of the museum's capital campaign committee.



Cosby

Former Gov. L. Douglas Wilder, the nation's first black elected governor, has estimated the museum project will cost \$200 million. Construction is scheduled to begin later this year.

Billy Joel, girlfriend get hitched

Singer-songwriter Billy Joel married his fiancée, Kate Lee, in a ceremony Saturday at his Long Island mansion, his record label said.

Joel, 55, and Lee, 23, in a sunset wedding at his waterfront home, Newsday reported in its online editions.

Columbia Records, Joel's label, announced the marriage Saturday night. A spokeswoman for Joel could not immediately be reached for comment.

Joel, who was previously married twice, including to supermodel Christie Brinkley, has had more than two dozen Top 10 hits.

Lee, a native of Huntington, W.Va., recently graduated from Ohio's Miami University and works as a restaurant correspondent for the PBS show "George Hirsch: Living It Up." She and Joel began dating last year, according to Newsday.

Jim Carrey's new DVD 'supports love'

Jim Carrey says his most recent movie is a good prescription for squabbling lovers.

Carrey plays a man who has the painful memories of his girlfriend erased from his mind in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind."

At a Los Angeles party for the film's DVD release, he offered this prescription about the hard-knock love story: "I guarantee you, couples who see this movie — and it's not goofy, it's not romanticized in anyway — but couples who see this movie will love each other after," he said. "They'll go, 'Awwww, what the hell ... you're not so bad!' It supports love."



Carrey

Joining Carrey at the party was co-star Kate Winslet, who plays the multi-colored-hair love interest Clementine.

The DVD is set for release Tuesday.

'Cheers' star joins 'Law & Order' spinoff

Bebe Neuwirth, who played Lilith the psychiatrist on sitcoms "Cheers" and "Frasier," is getting serious with a role as the latest member of the "Law & Order" franchise.

Neuwirth will play a tough Manhattan prosecutor in "Law & Order: Trial by Jury," coming to NBC next year. She joins actor Jerry Orbach, who is moving over from the original "Law & Order" series.

Neuwirth received two Emmy Awards for her portrayal of Frasier Crane's wife (and later ex-wife) on the NBC sitcoms.

An air date for the new "Law & Order" has not been announced.

Victoria's Secret Angels kick off tour

The Victoria's Secret Angels hit the road for the lingerie retailer's first nationwide tour: Angels Across America.

Tyra Banks, Gisele Bündchen, Heidi Klum, Adriana Lima and Alessandra Ambrosio will present the 2004 holiday gift collection in New York, Chicago, Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

In Las Vegas, the Angels will be inducted into the Hard Rock Hall of Fame.

A one-hour special documenting the tour will air Dec. 13 on VH1 in the States.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

LOST

But Not Forgotten

Dominic Monaghan stars in new series on ABC

BY TERRY MORROW

Scripps Howard News Service

When Dominic Monaghan came zooming back from Middle Earth, he hit with a resounding thud.

"My first year in Los Angeles was pretty hellish," says the British actor who played Merry in "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

"I came over here after the high point of 'Lord of the Rings,' and I saw all my friends jumping around to jobs, and I had nothing."

He's found work now. The 28-year-old is co-starring in the ABC Wednesday night series "Lost," the latest action ride from J.J. Abrams ("Alias").

The expansive cast also includes Matthew Fox ("Party of Five") and Ian Somerhalder ("Rules of Attraction").

Monaghan plays Charlie, an ex-rock star with a jones for heroin.

Unfortunately for Charlie, he's stuck on a remote island after a plane crash and has no hope of being rescued anytime soon.

The island's jungle has its own dangers. Mysterious creatures with a taste for the survivors are lurking and ready to pounce.

To say Charlie has seen better days is an understatement. Monaghan can relate to that piece of the character when his career was basically on hold for a year.

"My manager at the time was not doing anything for me, and I kind of got into a little bit of a funk. I was living in a (lousy) house in a (bad) part of town. I didn't have a car, and living in L.A. without a car, well, is difficult," Monaghan says.

The journey from Merry to Charlie was an unusual one for Monaghan.

He never expected to find himself "Lost."

"It's hard to imagine that this was happening to someone who was in one of the biggest movies of the year be-

fore," he recalls. "But I would not give up that time for anything in the world."

"I remember writing in my journal that I was going through this growing experience because of it. I came back down to Earth with a bump."

After Monaghan got new management, he started finding work. He says he was on the lookout for more movie roles when the script for "Lost" came his way. The role of the tortured Charlie intrigued him.

"The frustration of Charlie's situation means he has a lot going on in his head," Monaghan says. "He lives in his head quite a lot."

He's a drug addict, and drug addicts, by nature, are a selfish lot, he says.

It's a little like life imitating art. I'm not there now, but I can remember what it was like being a little bit out there on a limb."

Born in Germany and raised in Manchester, England, Monaghan gained fame through "Rings."

"Lost," his first major American series, is shot in Hawaii, forcing him to uproot again. But this time, the bachelor says, the move is to paradise.

"I've always had itching feet," he says. "I like being on the move every couple of years."

In reflection, Monaghan says he learned from the past year. "The whole experience (of unemployment) kind of got me back to who I am. I needed that," he says. "Two years of working solid (on 'Rings') put me at a point where I was a little bit exhausted. I needed to chill out and take it easy for a while."

Charged up about his new series, Monaghan says that playing Charlie could turn out to be the professional challenge he needed.

"For lack of a better word," he says, "Charlie is lost, and I can understand that almost too well. The (woes) you carry around with you as an actor always helps you flesh out a character."

"For lack of a better word, Charlie is lost, and I can understand that almost too well. The (woes) you carry around with you as an actor always helps you flesh out a character."

Dominic Monaghan

Actor



MARIO PEREZ/AP

Horoscope

The Gemini moon at the day's beginning gives way to a moodier Cancer vibe at day's end. There are phone calls, personal and business exchanges, and people coming into the picture again just to touch base. The social output is so high that by evening all we want to do is sit quietly and collect ourselves. Don't call anyone past 8 p.m.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(October 4). This year, resolve to get to the bottom of issues regarding ego, love and creativity. Also, focus on finding a work routine with which you really feel comfortable. You're getting to know yourself better and will be able to make choices that make this year blossom in ways you previously thought unimaginable. Lucky love signs are Sagittarius and Gemini.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Assess your emotional state. You're ready to embark on an exciting journey involving love, beauty and artistic expression, but first, you need to take stock of where you are. This prevents sadness or fear from sabotaging your plans. **TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Someone, perhaps a Gemini or Sagittarius, has a crucial piece of information that will help you. To find this person, ask yourself what it is you most need to learn. The answer should lead you in the right direction.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're the original commitment-phobe. So if you've carefully weighed all your options and done all your research, and you're still having trouble making a decision, ask a trusted confidant to choose for you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). With every meeting, an eventual parting is inevitable. Remember this, and you will never take it personally when a situation comes to an end. A parting of the ways is simply the conclusion of one cycle and the beginning of the next.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The more accomplished you become, the more caution you should exercise. Your own pride could prove to

be your downfall, tempting you to take on more than you can handle right now. Be aware of your limits.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Every day has its own unique challenges. Remaining flexible will help you roll with the punches. Rigidity is

your worst enemy during times of stress. So if your schedule is thrown for a loop, just try to make it up as you go.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

Are you punishing yourself for feeling too good? If coming down side right after landing a big account or promotion is part of your modus operandi, re-evaluate how comfortable you really are with the idea of success.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A little well-placed anger can inspire you to make great changes, either in the world or in yourself. But if you're holding out on anger or resentment for no good reason, you need to ask yourself what purpose it's serving.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Use creativity to boost your energy. While it's probably not a good idea to let the boss catch you doodling in your notepad, giving your mind the time and permission to wander could prove incredibly productive.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Pay attention to those things that put you on the defensive. Is your boss questioning your work? Did a spouse's joke hit a raw nerve? Whenever you feel the knee-jerk reaction to strike back, pause for a moment of clarity.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Admit it—you like to stir up controversy. Jumping into the fray gets your blood pumping. That's all well and good if it's for a worthy cause, but you might want to think twice if you're generating conflict just for conflict's sake.

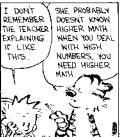
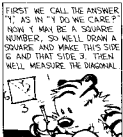
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Everyone may mean well, but somewhere along the way, the lines of communication could have gotten crossed. Double-check anything that seems wildly optimistic.

Creators Syndicate

Joyce Jillson



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



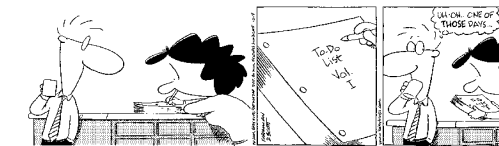
Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



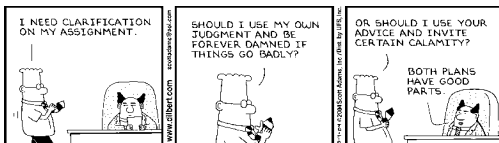
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



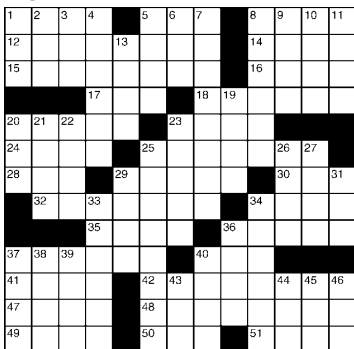
Hagar



Garfield



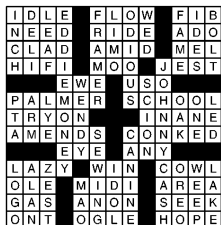
Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Feedbag fill
- 5 Capek play
- 8 Sitz baths
- 12 Turbot or plaice
- 14 Lotion additive
- 15 Division point, maybe
- 16 Kentucky fort
- 17 Existed
- 18 Mrs. — of legend
- 20 "Gasoline —"
- 23 Attorney-to-be's exam (Abbr.)
- 24 Aforementioned
- 25 Random criticism
- 28 Doctrine
- 29 Tittles
- 30 Triumphed
- 32 Popular hangout
- 34 Start again
- 35 "Bonanza" role
- 36 Esteem
- 37 Swimsuit style
- 40 Low sound?
- 41 Finished
- 42 Car-disassembling site
- 47 Supermarket stack
- 48 Leeway
- 49 Entanglement
- 50 Storm center
- 51 Dance lesson
- 3 Hosiery shade
- 4 Boiled slowly
- 5 Reformer Jacob
- 6 Tars' org.
- 7 Current regulator
- 8 "...and the Lord — away"
- 9 Arm bone
- 10 Loutish sort
- 11 Alluring
- 13 TV chef Bobby
- 19 Glaswegian girl
- 20 "— was saying, ..."
- 21 Cilium
- 22 From
- 31 Neither partner
- 33 Craving
- 34 Perches
- 36 Kachina
- 37 Strong dark beer
- 38 Terrible guy?
- 39 Gambling game
- 40 Speck
- 43 Alternative to 1-Across
- 44 Gilligan's home
- 45 Praiseworthy piece
- 46 Energy

Answer to Previous Puzzle



Down

- 1 Vacationing
- 2 "The Greatest"

10-4

CRYPTOQUIP

A P G E G A N A E R P Z N N C S
 A Y R C C L G W J Z G L A E R G E L
 S J A W A E R , A Y Q Z C E Z C P

W O Z A N N N A W Z J G W Z ?
 Saturday's Cryptquip: THE MOST FAMOUS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE OF ANY GREAT COMPOSER? SURELY BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH!
 Today's Cryptquip Clue: N equals L

Trinidad a big hit in return

'Tito' KO's Mayorga
after two-year layoff

By BARRY WILNER
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Felix "Tito" Trinidad stood by the ring, exhorting the flag-waving, chanting fans to fill the building with noise — before the fight.

After he disposed of Ricardo Mayorga with an eighth-round knockout to conclude a rousing return to the ring Saturday, Trinidad climbed the ring ropes and did the same thing.

And Madison Square Garden, the Puerto Rican star's home away from home, seemed to shake.

"I came back to win," Trinidad said after he pummeled Mayorga in the eighth round, knocking him down three times before the fight was stopped with 21 seconds to go in the round. "Before this fight, there were a lot of doubts."

"I told (promoter Don King) I could win and I did it," he said. In his first fight in more than two years, Trinidad simply overwhelmed the game Mayorga with a barrage of punches, including a left hook that finished the middleweight fight in front of a raucous crowd of 17,406.

"I've been in tough wars before, but I dominated this fight," Trinidad said. "He can take a good punch and he took a lot, which was bad for him."

Trinidad, 42-1 with 35 knockouts, lost the middleweight championship three years ago to Bernard Hopkins. After one more fight, he retired, unable to get a rematch with Hopkins.

Instead, Trinidad spent "the good life" in Puerto Rico, he said. But at 31, he is back and he showed against Mayorga that he is in his prime — and probably worthy of that rematch with Hopkins.

"I came out of this in excellent condition," he said. "It was a tough fight."

Mayorga never had been knocked down, but he was cut under the left eye in the fifth round, and he had to stop from a low blow to the right thigh in the sixth. Referee Steve Smoger allowed him nearly two minutes to recover with 40 seconds to go in the sixth, but Mayorga never was the same the rest of the way.

Mayorga, of Nicaragua, fell to 26-51. He knocked down Trinidad in the third and fought particularly well in the third and fourth rounds.

"I felt good about my performance, but my eye swelled up and I couldn't see some shots," said Mayorga, who was taken to a hospital for observation.

Trinidad was well ahead on all three cards: 68-64, 68-64 and 67-64.



Maria Sharapova of Russia returns a backhand to Poland's Marta Domachowska during the final of the Korea Open in Seoul on Sunday. Sharapova won 6-1, 6-1 to earn the fifth singles title of her career.

World Golf victory gives solace to Els

The Associated Press

THOMASTOWN, Ireland — The majors over, Ernie Els got a consolation prize Sunday by capturing his first World Golf Championship.

Els outlasted Thomas Bjorn in a brilliantly played quod at Mount Juliet, making a 6-foot birdie on the 17th hole for a cushion he desperately needed and closing with a 3-under 69 to win the American Express Championship by one shot.

The victory, his fourth of the year, allowed the 34-year-old South African to move past Tiger Woods to No. 2 in the world ranking, and gave Els yet another chance to reach No. 1 by the end of the year.

His next target is Vijay Singh, who didn't play this week because of damage to his Florida home by Hurricane Jeanne. The remnants of that storm covered southwestern Ireland with rain that spit down on Mount Juliet the entire day, although Els and Bjorn handled it just fine.

They were the only two players who had a realistic chance of winning, and neither was willing to give it away. "I tried to put him away, but I couldn't," Els said. "He didn't want to go away."

Bjorn, in contention for the first time since February, closed with a 4-under 68 and was within one shot of Els on three occasions. The 33-year-old Dane had a 70-foot eagle putt on the 17th hole, but ran it 10 feet by and missed the birdie putt coming back.

Els was short of the green, but pitched to 6 feet and made the putt.

That gave him the breathing room he needed. Els found the bunker on the 18th and blasted out to 15 feet, but when Bjorn missed his birdie putt from 40 feet, the South African could take two putts for his bogey.

Els finished at 18-under 270 and earned \$1.2 million, giving him firm control of the European tour money list.

Federer makes Borg with 12 straight finals victories

BANGKOK, Thailand — Top-ranked Roger Federer routed an injured Andy Roddick 6-4, 6-0 Sunday to capture the Thailand Open, joining John McEnroe and Bjorn Borg as the only players to win 12 straight ATP Tour finals in the last 25 years.

"It would be nice to break their record, but I'll take one tournament at a time," said Federer, who has won 10 titles this year. "I hope to play well until the end of the season."

Federer needed just 58 minutes to defeat the second-seeded Roddick, whose elbow was sore from his semifinal victory over Marat Safin.

Federer has won three majors this year — the Australian Open, Wimbledon and U.S. Open. He started the streak in Vienna, Austria, last October. He reached the semifinals at Madrid, Spain, and quarterfinals at Paris before winning the Tennis Masters Cup final in Houston to close the 2003 season.

"I came here not knowing what to expect," the top-seeded Swiss said. "I never believed I would win 10 titles in one year."

Bodine races to first truck win

FONTANA, Calif. — Former Nextel Cup driver Todd Bodine raced to his first Craftsman Truck Series victory Saturday night, ending Ted Musgrave's three-race winning streak at California Speedway.

Bodine held off Musgrave by 0.049 seconds, with both drivers averaging a crash on the final lap on the two-mile track. The winner averaged 127.141 mph in his Toyota in the 100-lap race that was slowed by only four caution periods.

Jack Sprague was third, followed by David Starr and series leader Bobby Hamilton.

Unspectacular White leads Sooners to win

By JEFF LATZKE
The Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops will be perfectly pleased to settle for 151 yards passing from Jason White in game after game, as long as the modest stats come with victories. Last season's Heisman Trophy winner produced little yardage, but he did complete three touchdown passes to break the OU's career record, and Adrian Peterson ran for 146 yards and a score to lead the second-ranked Sooners past Texas Tech 28-13 Saturday.

"We don't go into any game looking for numbers or looking to put anybody's numbers where they should be," Stoops said. "We go in to win, and Jason operated our offense. . . . You forget about his efficiency and the way he executed. He was really solid."

Tech quarterback Sonny Cumble, who entered the game as the nation's leading passer, looked sharp at times but had three interceptions and a fumble. He was 36-for-55 for 369 yards, 60 below his average — but still much better on paper than White forced.

White broke Josh Heupel's school mark of 53 TD passes in the third quarter, when fullback J.D. Rummels caught a pass in the right flat and took it into the end zone to put Oklahoma ahead 21-6.

Travis Wilson caught White's other two touchdown passes, in the second and fourth quarters.

White, who went 15-for-24, appeared a little late on several throws in the first half when his 14 attempts yielded merely 55 yards. But he was on the mark when he needed to be after half-time.

"I had a few bad throws starting off, but you've just got to keep playing the next play and forget about the bad ones and keep moving on," White said.

Peterson, making his first start in place of injured Kejuan Jones, scored on a 1-yard touchdown run in the first quarter and topped 100 yards rushing for his fourth straight game — extending his own Oklahoma freshman record.

Peterson set up Oklahoma's first score with a 61-yard run around the right end and down the sideline. Texas Tech's Khalid Naziruddin caught Peterson at an angle and dove to tackle the freshman as he tried to turn toward the goal post.

"Mark Clayton made a great block, James Moses made a block outside, and I cut it up and just ran the ball until I got tripped up a little bit," Peterson said. "That was a good run."

Three plays later, Peterson bounced off a couple tacklers and reached the end zone on the goal line to make it 7-0.

Peterson had a 57-yard touchdown run in the third quarter negated by a holding call against Jamall Brown.

Benson, Texas hammer Baylor, look ahead to OU

By JIM VERTUNO
The Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — The Texas Longhorns endured the rain to watch an easy victory couldn't help themselves. In the closing moments of a 44-14 win over Baylor, the chants started coming in waves.

"Best OU!"

No. 2 Oklahoma, the border rival that has thrashed the fifth-ranked Longhorns four straight years, heads south next weekend for the Red River Shootout in Dallas.

The chants poured down Saturday as the Longhorns left the field.

But by the time they reached the locker room, the players and coach Mack Brown didn't want to hear them.

Brown wanted the Longhorns to enjoy their first Big 12 conference win of the year, as well as a milestone for tailback Cedric Benson.

Benson ran for 188 yards and three touchdowns against Baylor, moving past Earl Campbell into second place on the Texas career rushing chart — trailing only Rick Williams.

"They really owe it to themselves to enjoy it for a day after they win," Brown said. "I told

them I'm not talking about the next opponent until Monday."

Vince Young threw his first two touchdown passes of the season to a wide receiver, both going to Tony Jeffery.

"No comment about OU," Young said. "We're not even thinking about it. We had a great week and we're having fun."

The Longhorns (4-0, 1-0) made quick work of the Bears, scoring on their first two drives and rolling up a 37-7 lead by halftime.

"We're a better team than we were out there today," said Baylor coach Guy Morriss. "I am waiting for the players to start believing in themselves a little bit more."

The nation's top rushing attack continued to chew up yards on the ground, piling up 303 against the Bears (2-2, 0-1).

Benson had a season-high 34 carries, staying in the game until the fourth quarter.

He passed Campbell on the first drive of the fourth quarter to reach 4,452 yards, nine more than the former Heisman Trophy winner who played from 1974-1977. Williams holds the school rushing record with 6,207 yards.

"It's a great honor," said Benson, who also tied a school record with a touchdown in 11 straight games. "I started to get a little emotional."

Auburn's Campbell silences critics with win

BY RALPH D. RUSSO

The Associated Press

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Jason Campbell is running the West Coast offense like an old pro and turning Auburn into a national title contender in the process.

The often-criticized quarterback threw for 252 yards and two touchdowns, and the eighth-ranked Tigers overwhelmed No. 10 Tennessee 34-10 on Saturday night.

Carnell Williams and Ronnie Brown each ran for a touchdown to complement Campbell, and the Tigers' swarming defense made Tennessee's two freshmen quarterbacks look like neophytes for the first time this season. Junior Rosegreen had four interceptions to set a record for Auburn (5-0, 3-0 Southeastern Conference) and tie the SEC mark.

"All day long I heard about how great their two quarterbacks are," Auburn coach Tommy Tuberville said. "I wouldn't trade them for the one we've got. [Campbell] played a great football game."

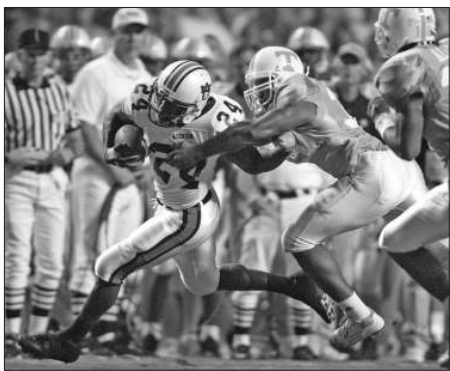
Erik Ainge got his first start for the Volunteers (3-1, 1-1) after racking up the best passer rating in the SEC over the first three games. The promotion did no good. He went 17-for-35 for 173 yards with four interceptions and a fumble.

Fellow freshman Bert Schaeffer had little success in his first game as a reliever. He also threw an interception and went 1-for-5.

"They're freshmen, they're going to learn," Vols coach Phillip Fulmer said. "We played against a better football team tonight."

Campbell has often received the blame from fans and media for Auburn's past offensive inconsistency, despite playing for four offensive coordinators in four seasons.

"That is something I have never worried about in my career," Campbell said. "I always knew I wasn't getting the credit people should give me, but that's one thing I didn't worry about."



Auburn's Carnell Williams (24) tries to get away from Tennessee's Jonathan Hefney during the second quarter of their game Saturday. Williams had 24 carries for 98 yards.

He is finally flourishing under coordinator Al Borges' West Coast offense, with its multiple shifts, quick throws and moving pockets. He also is showing the confidence and poise of a quarterback with 32 career starts.

Campbell summed up the transformation simply. "They're giving me the opportunity to use all my abilities."

Against the Vols, he looked off defenders and stepped up in the pocket. He threw with fine touch over defenders and zipped passes in between them. Campbell was 12-for-15 in the first half for 240 yards to lead the Tigers to a 31-3 lead.

The Tigers took the field knowing that their two main SEC West rivals — LSU and Arkansas — had lost. As if bolstered by the opportunity to grab command of the division, Auburn controlled the first quarter.

The Tigers forced a three-and-out on the first series of the game, got a piece of Tennessee's punt, and Campbell and his two star tailbacks went to work at their own 45.

The Tigers drove the field with a mix of power running and quick passes. Brown finished the job by bowling over Tennessee's Jason Allen, knocking the safety's helmet off on the way to a 9-yard touchdown run.

After the Vols responded with a field goal, the Tigers marched down field again but couldn't complete the drive this time. Brown fumbled at the 5 and Tennessee recovered at the 1.

It was only a temporary reprieve for the Vols.

Ainge lost the ball on a sneak and Auburn was back in the red zone. Campbell then made it 14-3 with a 5-yard pass to Ben Obomanu.

When Williams ran over Allen for a 5-yard touchdown in the second quarter it was 24-3 and most of the 107,828 fans at Neyland Stadium were stunned silent.

"We had so many mistakes we put them in perfect position to win," Tennessee linebacker Kevin Burnett said. "Mental errors, missed tackles. That comes back to hurt you in the end."

Just when it looked as though Tennessee might make a game of it, Auburn's defense came up with its third takeaway. Travis Williams picked off Ainge's tipped pass at the LSU 32 with 2:05 left in the half.

Auburn wasn't about to get conservative. Campbell went deep on the next play, hitting Brown for 38 yards.

Moments later, Campbell threw a bubble to Courtney Taylor slanting over the middle and the receiver broke free for a 31-yard TD play and a 28-point halftime lead.

Rosegreen picked off three passes in a second half that was otherwise a formality.

For Tennessee, it gets no easier next week; the Vols go to Georgia, which made a statement last season with a 45-16 victory over LSU on Saturday.

"We have a lot left to go," Vols tackle Michael Munoz said. "We still control our destiny in the SEC East."

Auburn, a team that fell far short of lofty expectations last season, now has 17½-game lead in the SEC West and its first win at Knoxville since 1983.

"We had something to prove," Tuberville said. "We got better each game. We got stronger each snap."

Greene, Georgia dash LSU's hopes for title repeat

BY PAUL NEWBERRY

The Associated Press

ATHENS, Ga. — Georgia's offense finally showed up, and the Bulldogs now truly look like a team that's capable of challenging for a national championship.

The LSU Tigers' hopes of making another run at No. 1 are finished.

David Greene set a school record by throwing five touchdowns passes and No. 3 Georgia won its third straight game in the Southeastern Conference, shredding 13th-ranked LSU and its fear-some defense 45-16 on Saturday.

"It was something you probably just dream about," Greene said.

Georgia (4-0, 2-0 SEC) has never been an offensive juggernaut during Mark Richt's four years as coach, and the last two games were especially frustrating. The Bulldogs scored only three touchdowns in defenseless victories over South Carolina and Marshall.

"I was little befuddled," Richt admitted. "We had practiced excellently well. We had some plays who could make plays. I was trying to figure out why we couldn't make those plays in the game."

Problem solved. Less than 21 minutes into this one, Georgia already had reached the end zone three times against a defense that was ranked fifth nationally in both points and yards allowed.

By the end, LSU (3-2, 1-2) had given up its most points since a 56-13 loss to Florida in 1996.

"This was a curveball to me," Tigers coach Nick Saban said. "When things like this happen, you must dig deep down inside."

Greene completed only 10 of 19 passes for 172 yards, but half his completions went for TDs. He tied Johnny Rauch as the winningest quarterback in Georgia history with his 36th victory as a starter.

Reggie Brown had two TD catches and set a career high with 110 yards receiving. Fred Gibson also had a pair of scoring passes.

LSU cornerback Trey Daniels had an especially miserable day, getting burned on three of Greene's touchdowns.

The Bulldogs took advantage of the Tigers' blitzing scheme, protecting well up the middle and relying on their receivers to beat the man-on-man coverage.

"Greene just put the ball up in the air and told us to go get it,"

Gibson said. "I guess they were shocked. We came out and really didn't do anything wrong."

The Bulldogs didn't just pass the ball. Freshman Danny Ware, who sat out the last game with a bruised lung, rushed for 109 yards.

Another freshman, Thomas Brown, chipped in with 81 yards and scored Georgia's final touchdown on a short run.

The Georgia defense made life miserable for LSU quarterbacks Marcus Randall and JaMarcus Russell, who spent most of their afternoon running for their lives and wound up getting sacked five times. Hard-hitting safety Thomas Davis caused two fumbles by Tigers running backs, both of them leading to Georgia touchdowns.

The Tigers claimed the BCS share of the national title last season, but there won't be any repeat. LSU already has more losses than its championship team. That's not the only change from 2003.

LSU beat the Bulldogs twice on their way to No. 1, including a 34-13 rout in last year's SEC championship game. Georgia avenged the worst loss of the Richt era with a replay of that De-

cember game, only it was the red and black dominating this one.

"I didn't see it coming," said LSU cornerback Corey Webster, who also gave up a TD pass. "We made those plays last year."

The Bulldogs raced to a 24-0 lead, withstood a brief flurry from LSU at the end of the first half and sealed the victory in the third quarter.

On Georgia's second possession, Greene lofted a perfect pass down the right side, Reggie Brown outpumped Daniels for the ball and got a foot down just inside the pylon for a 25-yard touchdown catch.

D.J. Shockley relieved Greene on Georgia's next possession, completing a 47-yard pass to Brown that set up Andy Bailey's 32-yard field goal.

The Bulldogs didn't let up. Davis jarred the ball loose from Justin Vincent and Quentin Moser recovered at the LSU 35. Greene went back in and finished off the drive with a 2-yard TD pass to Gibson, who leaped over Daniels to make it 17-0.

LSU fumbled the ball right back. Davis stuck his helmet into Jacob Hester's belly, the ball came flying out and Odell Thurman fell on it at the LSU 40.

Georgia took advantage again. Thomas Brown converted a fourth-and-1 by breaking a tackle in the backfield, then Greene

floated a 29-yard scoring pass to Reggie Brown, who made a leaping catch and somehow got it down before tumbling out of bounds.

Once again, Daniels was the man getting beat.

Down by 24 points, the Tigers finally showed signs of life.

Russell threw an 18-yard TD pass to Dwayne Bowe with 1:23 left in the half, and the Tigers got the ball back after a short punt.

Russell completed a 24-yard pass to Craig Davis, leading to Chris Jackson's 31-yard field goal on the final play of the half.

LSU went off the field with some momentum, but it didn't last long. Greene threw two more touchdowns passes in the third to make it 36-10 — a 24-yarder to Gibson and a 21-yarder to Sean Bailey, the first TD of his career. The Bulldogs have another crucial SEC game next week against No. 10 Tennessee. Now, at least, they know their offense can keep up with the other side of the line. "Hopefully," Richt said, "this will give us some confidence, some momentum. We needed a boost for sure."

Orton helps Purdue bomb ND

By TOM COYNE
The Associated Press

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Purdue's Kyle Orton accomplished something that Drew Brees, Matt Everett and Mark Hermann never did — win at Notre Dame.

Orton threw four touchdown passes, including a 97-yarder to Taylor Stubblefield, to lead the 15th-ranked Boilermakers to a 41-16 victory Saturday. It was Purdue's first win at Notre Dame Stadium since Ara Parseghian's last year as Irish coach in 1974, when the Irish were ranked No. 2.

Orton was 21-for-31 for 385 yards, third most in his career, to help the Boilermakers (4-0) end a 13-game losing streak at Notre Dame (3-2). Purdue coach Joe Tiller said it might have been Orton's best game.

"I'm not surprised by what No. 18 can do any more," Tiller said. "He does a great job, and our team is following his talent."

Orton, who has 17 TD passes with no interceptions this season, was asked after the game if he thought his performance might help him Heisman Trophy chances.

"You guys keep bringing up the Heisman. I don't have a vote on that," he said.

"The Irish certainly were impressed, though."

"He was unstoppable," defensive end Justin Tuck said. "A lot of people say he is the leading candidate for the Heisman Trophy. He's got it."

In their last three trips to Notre Dame Stadium, the Boilermakers had come close to beating the Irish but always had a key turnover that cost them. On Saturday, though, the Boilermakers, who have not lost a fumble this year, didn't turn the ball over once against a Notre Dame defense that had forced 16 turnovers in its first four games.

"I told the coach before the game that if we could get 24 points and no turnovers, we would be in good shape," Orton said. "To get 41 points showed we played outstanding today."

The victory also marked the first time Purdue has won a road game at a traditional powerhouse under Tiller, who is in his eighth season. The Boilermakers have lost six straight at Ohio State, they are 0-3-1 at Penn State and haven't won at Michigan since 1966.

Orton said he thought too much was made about Purdue's losing streak at Notre Dame.

"We don't go around thinking about that too much, but it's nice for the fans and the program to get a win here," Orton said.

The Boilermakers also got a big play from Jerome Brooks, who returned a kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown, right as the Irish's Dame had tied the score at 3-3.

Army's skid hits 19 games

By MARK JOHNSON
The Associated Press

WEST POINT, N.Y. — Lonta Hobbs scored his second touchdown of the game with 41 seconds left to rally TCU to a 21-17 victory over Army on Saturday, extending the Black Knights' losing streak to 19 games, the longest in the nation.

TCU trailed 17-0 at halftime after a game that has not won at home since defeating Tulane 42-37 on Oct. 27, 2001.

Hobbs ran for 106 yards, and his closing 2-yard scoring run capped an 11-play, 62-yard drive. Brandon Hassell, replacing ineffective Kyle Kummer at quarterback, completed 14 of 23 passes for 158 yards and one touchdown for TCU (3-2, 1-1 Conference USA).

Carlton Jones ran for 108 yards and one touchdown for Army (0-4, 0-2). Zac Dahman, starting his first game for Army this season, completed 12 of 26 passes for 214 yards.

"It was a game of almost two halves," said first-year Army coach Bobby Ross. "We won the first one, and they won the second one. ... I feel like now I know where we can go to. We've got seven football games left. There's a lot for this season left."

TCU's offense entered the game ranked 26th in the country, but struggled in the first half.

A defensive hit Jacob Murphy with a 54-yard strike on the second play of Army's first possession and Tielor Robinson scored on a 3-yard run three plays later to open the scoring. It was the Black Knights' first lead of the season.

On Army's next possession Dahman hit Walter Hill with a 35-yard pass to move Army into TCU 10. That set up Carlton Jones' 10-yard TD run, putting the Black Knights ahead 14-0.

okies knock off No. 6 Mountaineers

The Associated Press

BLACKSBURG, Va. — Brandon Pace kicked four field goals to atone for last week's late miss, and Virginia Tech played superb defense to beat No. 6 West Virginia 19-13 Saturday, avenging last year's loss to the Mountaineers.

West Virginia's injured Rashad Marshall's pass with 18 seconds left to seal the victory for Virginia Tech, which held on after leading 16-0 in the second half.

Last year, the Hookies' national title aspirations were dashed by a 28-7 loss at West Virginia.

West Virginia had its chances, but its offense sputtered.

On the visitors' last possession, Marshall pitched the ball to Charles Hales, a backup quarterback who lined up in the backfield on the play and completed a 32-yard pass to Eddie Jackson. With a 15-yard penalty for roughing the passer tacked on, WVU had the ball at Tech's 41.

But on the very next play, Fuller ended the Mountaineers' hopes by picking off a pass at the 22.

No. 4 Miami 27, Georgia Tech 3: Brock Berlin threw three touchdown passes, and Frank Gore ran for 115 yards in Miami's first Atlantic Coast Conference road game.

Playing without the injured P.J. Daniels, the ACC's leading rusher, Georgia Tech (2-1, 2-1) was shut down by Miami's tough defense, which forced four turnovers. Miami (4-0, 2-0 ACC) allowed only one offensive touchdown in four games.

Berlin completed 10 of 20 passes for 200 yards with no interceptions.

No. 9 Florida 38, North Carolina 16: Wyatt Sexton threw three touchdown passes in his starting debut, and Leon Washington ran for 153 yards and a touchdown for host Florida State.

The Seminoles (3-1, 2-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) built a 24-6 lead early in the third quarter, but didn't put the game out of reach until Sexton's 15-yard TD pass to Chauncey Stovall completed the scoring with 6:53 left.

North Carolina (2-3, 1-2 ACC) managed 363 yards against Florida State's tough defense, but had difficulty reaching the end zone.

No. 10 California 49, Oregon 17: Chase Lyman had five catches for a career-high 176 yards and three touchdowns, and Aaron Rodgers completed 12 of 16 passes for 140 yards and three scores for visiting California (3-0, 1-0 Pac-10).

Cal had not played for 20 days. A game against Southern Mississippi, originally scheduled for Sept. 16, was postponed by Hurricane Ivan.

No. 16 Florida 45, Arkansas 30: Chris Leak threw for a career-high 322 yards and three touchdowns, and Florida (3-1, 1-1 SEC) held off another late rally.

The Gators extended their winning streak against the visiting Razorbacks (3-2, 1-1) to five games — every matchup since Arkansas joined the Southeastern Conference in 1992.

Top 25

Florida led 38-7 late in the third quarter before the Razorbacks scored 23 consecutive points. Quarterback Matt Jones, who leads the conference in total offense, hurt the Gators running and passing.

Louisiana Tech 28, 17 Fresno St. 21: In Ruston, La., Ryan Moats scored a fourth touchdown with less than 3:20 left and finished with 236 yards rushing for Louisiana Tech (3-2, 2-0 Western Athletic).

Fresno State led 21-20 with four minutes left and was trying to run out the clock. But Byron Santiago intercepted Paul Pincus' pass and returned it to the 16. Moats scored two plays later.

No. 18 Minnesota 14, Penn St. 7: Laurence Maroney ran for 144 yards and a touchdown and No. 18 Minnesota overcame a visiting Penn State's scrappy defense.

The Gophers (5-0, 2-0 Big Ten) recorded their second straight 5-0 start since 1940-41 and won four in a row against Penn State. But Minnesota's offense, which entered the game averaging 44 points, stalled frequently against the Lions (2-3, 0-2).

No. 19 Michigan 35, Indiana 14: Chad Henne threw for 316 yards and three touchdowns, and Leon Hart returned a punt 76 yards for a score for visiting Michigan, which retained a share of the Big Ten lead by winning their third straight game.

No. 20 Wisconsin 24, Illinois 7: Anthony Davis ran for 213 yards and three touchdowns in his first action in a month and host Wisconsin (5-0, 2-0 Big Ten) held its fifth straight opponent to a touchdown or less, a feat it last accomplished in 1951.

No. 21 Arizona 28, Oregon 13: Andrew Walter overcame a shaky start to throw three touchdowns and three-string tailback Hakim Hill ran for 134 yards and a touchdown to lead visiting Arizona State.

Oregon (1-3, 0-1) had won seven straight Pac-10 openers.

No. 22 Louisville 59, East Carolina 7: In Louisville, Ky., Eric Shelton tied a Cardinals record with five rushing touchdowns and finished with 129 yards.

Louisville forced five turnovers and converted three into touchdowns in its final tuneup before a Nov. 14 date with fourth-ranked Miami.

No. 23 Boise St. 38, SMU 20: Jared Zabransky threw for 190 yards and two touchdowns to help Boise State extend the longest winning streak in the nation to 16 games. The Broncos also won at home for the 22nd straight time.

No. 25 Oklahoma St. 36, Iowa St. 27: Vernand Morency ran for 143 yards and two touchdowns and Jason Hicks kicked three field goals for host Oklahoma State.

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Walk on the wild side

Astros one victory away from NL wild-card berth

The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Roy Oswalt became the NL's first 20-game winner and Jeff Kent and Craig Biggio each homered twice as the Houston Astros pounded the Colorado Rockies 9-3 on Saturday night to take over the lead in the NL wild-card chase.

NL Roundup

The Astros' 17th straight home victory gave them a one-game lead over the San Francisco Giants. The Chicago Cubs were eliminated from the postseason after losing their fifth straight, 8-6 to Atlanta.

A victory in the regular-season finale Sunday or a Giants loss would give Houston the NL's final playoff spot — an improbable thought almost a month ago when it was four games below .500 and seven games behind the Cubs.

An Astros loss and Giants victory on Sunday would force a play-off game Monday in San Francisco.

Kent hit a two-run shot off Adam Bernero in the fifth for his 278th home run as a second baseman, breaking Ryne Sandberg's major league record.

Oswalt (20-10) won 20 games for the first time in his career, allowing one run and five hits in seven innings.

Braves' B. Braves' 6: Moises Alou, Aramis Ramirez and Sammy Sosa homered to help

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give the Cubs a 6-2 lead that starter Carlos Zambrano couldn't hold. J.D. Drew's two-run triple in the eighth put Atlanta ahead for good.

Kevyn Gabyroski (3-2) pitched a scoreless seventh and John Smoltz got the last four outs for his 44th save.

Brewers 5, Cardinals 1: Ben Sheets (12-14) pitched his fifth complete game of the season and visiting Milwaukee took advantage of a shaky playoff tuneup by Jason Marquis (15-7).

Sheets allowed eight hits and an unearned run, winning for the first time in 13 decisions since the All-Star break. He struck out 10 for a career-high 263, second in the NL behind Randy Johnson.

Marquis threw 112 pitches in 4 1/3 innings, giving up three runs and five hits.

Pirates 3, Reds 1: Jason Kendall had three hits and Jose Castillo hit the 235th home allowed by host Cincinnati's pitching staff.

The emotional highlight came in the eighth, when Barry Larkin got a standing ovation for a pinch-hit single, then left for a pinch-runner. The 40-year-old shortstop is wrapping up his 19th and possibly final season with the Reds.

Marlins 4, Phillies 3: Mike Lowell and Miguel Cabrera hom-

ered to lead Florida over host Philadelphia, hours after the Phillies fired manager Larry Bowa.

Josh Beckett (9-9) gave up an RBI single to Tomas Perez in the second and a solo homer to Jason Michaels in the sixth. He allowed seven hits and struck out five in eight innings. Armando Benitez topped his 47th save.

Expos 6, Mets 3: Brad Wilkerson hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the ninth inning in the Expos' next-to-last game before moving to Washington.

Wilkerson, who also had two doubles, connected against reliever Braden Looper (2-5) after an error by Kaz Matsui — making his second start at second base — and a walk to pinch-hitter Ryan Church.

Diamondbacks 7, Padres 6: Randy Johnson got some rare offensive support, including his own two-run double and the host Diamondbacks rallied from a five-run deficit.

Johnson (16-14) allowed six runs, only one earned — and 10 hits in eight innings. He struck out eight and walked none to cap a strong season made more impressive by the struggles of the Diamondbacks, who have lost 111 games.

It was the first time in 11 starts that Arizona scored more than three runs for Johnson, the major league strikeouts leader with 290.

Philadelphia fires Bowa

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Larry Bowa was fired as manager of the Philadelphia Phillies on Saturday, a day before the end of yet another disappointing year.

The Phillies failed to reach the playoffs for the 11th straight season after coming in as favorites to win the NL East. They were 85-75 when Bowa was dismissed before the night's game against Florida.

Bench coach Gary Varsho

was to manage the Phillies' last two games on Saturday and Sunday.

Earlier Saturday, Bowa met with the media while speculation swirled that he would be fired at the end of the season and that pitching coach Joe Kerrigan would resign.

"I'm not talking about it," Bowa said then. "You guys have all speculated. You all have your unidentified sources. You probably know more than I do, which is pretty good."



Steve Finley's grand slam in the bottom of the ninth inning on Saturday beat the San Francisco Giants 7-3 and clinched the NL West title for the Los Angeles Dodgers. At left is Giants catcher Norvot Torrealba.

Dodgers: Finley gives L.A. dramatic finish

DODGERS, FROM BACK PAGE

The stunning loss — keyed by three walks and a critical error — left the Giants in a precarious position.

Their division hopes dashed, the only way Barry Bonds and Co. can make it back to the postseason is if they beat the Dodgers on Sunday. Houston loses its home game to Colorado, and then they beat the Astros in a one-game playoff Monday in San Francisco. The Astros beat the Rockies 9-3 Saturday night for a one-game lead over the Giants.

"We lost — we didn't win," said Marquis. "Grisson, who burned his former team for the second straight day driving in all three San Francisco runs. 'We played a good game, we gave it up at the end. It doesn't matter how we lost. We've got to come out and win tomorrow.'"

"It doesn't matter how we lost. We've got to come out and win tomorrow."

Marquis Grissom
Giants outfielder

"Then I got something I could drive, and I hit it the other way."

With the winning run at third and one out, Finley hit an 0-1 pitch from Wayne Franklin into the right-field seats, and the celebration began immediately.

Finley was mobbed at the plate and the party continued for several minutes as the sellout crowd of 54,594 went wild.

"Everything was appropriate about that," Werth said of Finley's heroics. "He's unbelievable. He's brought a lot to the table for us this year."

Yency Brazoban (6-2), the sixth Los Angeles pitcher, worked one inning to earn the win.

"Everybody's fine," Franklin said in a somber San Francisco clubhouse. "We're sad that we lost. We have to think about tomorrow."

Hermanson was pitching for the fifth straight day, and questioned some of plate umpire Tim McClelland's calls.

"I feel a little overworked and tired, but I wanted to be out there," he said. "I made some good pitches he called balls. That kills you. I gave it everything I had today."

"This is crunch time — I want to be out there."

Tomko allowed four hits in 7 1/3 innings before being relieved by Scott Eyre with two on and one out in the eighth. Eyre retired Finley on a grounder to second and Hermanson came on to induce Adrian Beltre to ground to short, ending the inning.

Little did anyone think at that stage that Finley would get another chance.

Grissom hit a two-out, two-run single off Elmer Dessens in the fourth to break a scoreless tie, and added his 21st homer off Duane Sanchez to begin the seventh, making it 3-0.

Dessens, making his first start in 2 1/2 months, was relieved by Wilson Alvarez after allowing three hits and two runs in four innings.

During the recount of the 2000 Election in Florida, a lawyer wrote a memorandum explaining how to use legal technicalities to disqualify the Absentee Ballot Votes of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Guardsmen serving overseas.

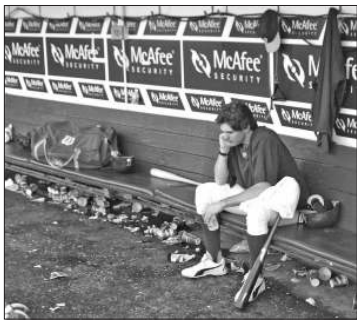
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Oakland Athletics pitcher Barry Zito sits on the bench after the Anaheim Angels beat Oakland 5-4 on Saturday to clinch their first division title in 18 years and eliminate the A's from postseason contention.

Angels: Bullpen proves to be fatal flaw for A's

ANGELS, FROM BACK PAGE

It's still not clear who the Angels will face in the first round of the playoffs — it will either be the New York Yankees or Boston.

The A's had won the division in three of the past four years, and made the playoffs in all of those seasons. They had lost in the first round each time.

Oakland's Eric Byrnes grabbed his helmet in disbelief and frustration when he flew out to left to end it, and a celebration ensued on the mound by the Angels. It quickly moved into the clubhouse, where champagne and beer began flowing freely.

The A's realigned their rotation to have Mark Mulder, Barry Zito and Tim Lincecum on the mound for the final weekend, but it didn't work out.

The A's dropped to 12-18 in September — a shocking development for a team that's been the best in baseball in the final month the past four years.

Seven months gone from the Angels, the lefty told manager Ken Machuta he couldn't go out for the eighth because his legs had become stiff the past two innings and it was affecting his pitching.

Then, A's relievers Jim Mecir, Ricardo Rincon (1-1) and Octavio Dotel couldn't hold a 4-2 lead. "I asked [pitching coach] Curt [Young] if he was confident in the bullpen right now and he said yes," Zito said. "In retrospect, it was the wrong call. But my legs were tightening up for the last couple of innings. I have to trust myself. I'm going to pitch as long as I can."

Estrada lined a two-run double off the right-field wall against Rincon, who entered after Mecir allowed signals to Bengie Molina and Figgins.

Macha then turned to Dotel, the closer who has been fighting elbow tendinitis. Anderson, playing with knee tendinitis, got his second hit of the game.

Brendan Donnelly (5-2) pitched 2 1/3 innings for the win and Troy Percival finished for his 33rd save in 38 chances.

The A's held a team meeting before the game, and Eric Chavez hit a two-run double in the third to give them the lead. Oakland did not do much at the plate, managing only 19 hits in its last four games.

"It's weird," Chavez said. "It's very apparent to the rest of baseball what our problems are. If you ask me, we should have run away with this division this year."

Guerrero hit a tying, two-run homer off Zito with two outs in the sixth. It was Guerrero's 39th homer and career-high 206th hit.

He's being touted as the league MVP. "I would welcome the prize with a lot of love," he said through a translator. "But right now I can't think about anything but the other 25 guys here."

The A's took back the lead in the bottom half. Jermaine Dye hit a leadoff single, then Damian Miller doubled two batters later to center and the ball got past a diving Anderson when he tried to backhand the ball and rolled to the wall.

Dye scored with a headfirst dive and touched the plate with his left hand — then jumped up and threw his arm in the air in excitement. Miller's hit chased Angels starter Kelvin Escobar, who pitched on three days' rest for the fourth time in his career.

After David Eckstein reached on shortstop Bobby Crosby's error, Zito was winless in his last four starts and six of seven.

Oakland has lost six of eight and nine of 12.

"This is a sour note for us," center fielder Mark Kotsay said. "We just gave it to them. Zito did an unbelievable job. He gave us the lead, and that's all you can ask. I have no answers for what happened."

Angels fans lined the front-row seats behind the team's dugout and down the first-base line and began chanting "Let's Go, Angels!" about an hour before the first pitch.

'Big Cat' is purring again

Galarraga beats cancer, age (43) to reach playoffs

BY JANIE MCCAULEY

The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Andres Galarraga partied like teammates half his age, dancing and chugging champagne to celebrate the Anaheim Angels' division title.

To the "Big Cat," winning the AL West meant a little more.

Galarraga was diagnosed with a recurrence of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma last November, a malady which when first discovered caused him to miss the entire 1999 season. He underwent surgery in November and had a stem cell transplant in February — then made quite a return.

He not only made it back to baseball, but helped put a team in the playoffs. The Angels beat the Oakland Athletics 5-4 on Saturday to clinch the club's first division championship in 18 years.

Anaheim called up the 43-year-old infielder in September after signing him to a minor league contract Aug. 4. Galarraga appeared in 25 games with Salt Lake City of the Pacific Coast League, batting .304 with four homers and 19 RBIs.

"It's really special after the cancer earlier this year," Galarraga said between champagne baths. "I was keeping my mind hopeful that I'd find somebody to give me an opportunity to play."

And he even contributed to the Angels' title with a pinch-hit homer leading off the ninth inning of Friday's 10-0 rout of the A's.



Andres Galarraga, at left, joins teammates in dousing Vladimir Guerrero with champagne after Anaheim clinched the AL West title on Saturday.

It was career homer No. 399 for the popular Venezuelan. Getting to 400 homers is a major reason he wanted to come back this season after the cancer.

"That made me happy," he said of his first homer this year. "I hope I get 400 tomorrow."

Galarraga, who made his big league debut with the Montreal Expos in 1985, hit .301 with 12 homers and 42 RBIs in 110 games last season with the San Francisco Giants, who made the playoffs and lost to the World Series champion Florida Marlins.

"He's the Big Cat. He's an unbelievable guy to have around," backup catcher Jose Molina said. "After he recovered earlier this year, Galarraga asked his agent to find him a team that would be in the race with a chance to win."

This postseason run might be his last.

"But you can never tell," he said. "It's different for me and it's frustrating to not play every day. If someone specifically asked for me, I might consider it."

Twins, Tribe forced to call timeout

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota and Cleveland were tied 5-5 after 11 innings Saturday when the game was suspended because the Metrodome field needed to be reconfigured for the Penn State-Minnesota football game.

The Twins and Indians were to resume Sunday afternoon, followed by the regularly scheduled season finale.

The AL Central champion Twins can still begin the playoffs at home by winning the suspended game and the Sunday win/loss record. The Twins would open at New York against the Yankees.

Incidentally, Minnesota (5-0) beat Pittsburgh 16-7.

Rangers 10, Mariners 4: Michael Young had a two-run homer and got three hits, including Edgar Martinez Day in Seattle.

The sellout crowd of 45,817 got a special treat when Martinez, Seattle's retiring designated hitter, started the ninth inning at third base, his first appearance at third since July 2, 1997. He stayed in for one pitch, leaving to a stand-



ing ovation and scattered boos when Willie Bloomquist took the field.

Martinez didn't have a good day at the plate, going hitless with a walk in three at-bats.

Kenny Rogers (18-9) pitched into the sixth, allowing three runs on seven hits with four strikeouts and one walk.

Ichiro Suzuki boosted his major league-record hit total 260 with a fifth-inning single.

Blue Jays 4, Yankees 2: Roy Halladay (8-8) pitched eight innings as host Toronto beat New York. Kevin Brown (10-6), auditioning for a spot in the Yankees' postseason rotation, held the Blue Jays to Vernon Wells' double in the fourth and one unearned run through five innings.

Halladay allowed one run on six hits, struck out five and walked none. Miguel Batista pitched the ninth for his fifth save.

Red Sox 7-7, Orioles 5-5: Doug Mientkiewicz hit a tiebreaking run in the seventh as visiting Boston rallied from a

5-1 deficit to complete a doubleheader sweep.

In the opener, Bronson Arroyo threw three shutout innings in his final tuneup before the playoffs and Johnny Damon drove in three runs.

Baltimore's Javy Lopez and Boston's Orlando Cabrera hit three runs homers in the second game.

Royals 10, White Sox 2: Ruben Gotay drove in four runs with his first major league homer and a triple, helping Brian Anderson (6-12) and host Kansas City snap a seven-game losing streak. Calvin Pickering and Angel Berroa also homered for Kansas City.

Anderson pitched his second complete game of the year, giving up seven hits. He struck out four and walked one.

Tigers 5, Devil Rays 1: Marcus Thames had his first two-homer game and drove in three runs for host Detroit.

Craig Monroe also homered for Detroit, which set a major league record by having 11 players with at least 10 home runs.

Gary Knotts (7-6) allowed one run and four hits, walked two and struck out four in 7 1/3 innings. Scott Kazmir (2-3) gave up four runs and five hits in six innings, walked one and struck out six.



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SPORTS



Auburn's demolition of Tennessee,
Georgia's dismantling of LSU
show who rules the SEC, Page 26



Perfect Hollywood endings

Dodgers rally for seven runs in ninth to seal NL West title

BY JOHN NADEL
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Dodgers have spent many recent Octobers watching postseason baseball on television.

This year, they'll be playing. Steve Finley's grand slam capped a seven-run rally in the bottom of the ninth inning, and Los Angeles won the NL West by beating the San Francisco Giants 7-3 on Saturday.

"We do it the Hollywood way — that's for sure," closer Eric Gagne said. "It's amazing."

The Dodgers qualified for the postseason for the first time since making it as the wild card in 1996. They won the division the year before.

Now, they'll look to win their first postseason game since upsetting Oakland in the 1988 World Series. The Dodgers will play at St. Louis if Houston wins the wild card or at Atlanta if San Francisco wins the wild card.

"We never quit — we're winners,"

said Odalis Perez, who will pitch the playoff opener. "We know how to do it. We finish."

Finish, indeed. The comeback victory was the Dodgers' NL-leading 53rd of the season, setting a franchise record. The old mark was 52 by the 1953 Brooklyn Dodgers. Thirteen of the team's last 14 wins have been comeback victories, and they've won 26 in the final at-bat.

The 39-year-old Finley, acquired by the Dodgers from last-place Arizona at the trade deadline, was only too happy to come to the plate in such a spot.

"For the last two weeks, I've been putting myself in that situation," said Finley, drenched in champagne in a raucous clubhouse.

"I was dreaming about it, and it happened," Finley said. "I wanted it. I knew I was going to get it done. When I walked to the plate, I knew the game was over. I even had a smile on my face, if I remember."

SEE DODGERS ON PAGE 29



PASADENA STAR-NEWSAP

Los Angeles Dodgers' Steve Finley, center, is mobbed by teammates after hitting a grand slam in the ninth inning against San Francisco on Saturday. The Dodgers won 7-3 and clinched the NL West.



Anaheim Angels' Darin Erstad (17) scores the go-ahead run in the eighth inning of Saturday's 5-4 victory over Oakland to clinch the AL West title. At left is Athletics catcher Damian Miller.

Angels tee off on A's bullpen for first division title since '86

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Once they got their chance to go head-to-head, the Anaheim Angels showed Oakland which team was best in the AL West.

After chasing the Athletics all September, the Angels scored three times in the eighth inning to beat Oakland 5-4 Saturday and clinch their first division title in 18 years.

The teams were tied for first place when the series began Friday, and many expected the race to come down to the last day of the season. But Anaheim ended the suspense with two consecutive wins.

"I knew our guys weren't going to melt," manager Mike Scioscia said moments before getting soaked in champagne by several players.

"We have a lot of very, very talented players."

That's for sure.

Darin Erstad hit a tying, two-run double, then scored on Garret Anderson's single as the Angels earned their first playoff berth since 2002, when they won the World Series as the wild card.

Vladimir Guerrero homered for the Angels, who trailed Oakland by one game last Monday. But after beating the A's 10-0 Friday night, Anaheim won again to wrap it up.

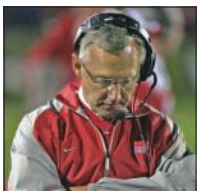
The Angels have won seven of eight overall and are 20-7 in their last 27 road games.

"What we did to be at this point, nobody expected it," Anaheim leadoff hitter Chone Figgins said. "It's motivation. We were down four or five games, but we still had to play in our division. When you still have to play in your division and it's coming down to the home stretch, you get a little more energy."

SEE ANGELS ON PAGE 30

Ohio State's stunning loss in overtime to Northwestern destined to shake up national polls

Page 25



Trinidad makes triumphant ring return, knocks out Mayorga in eighth round

Page 23



After missing out in the majors, Els earns consolation prize by holding on for first World Golf Championship

Page 23